THE PILGRIM

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"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." I Peter 2:11

FAREWELL, OLD YEAR

Farewell, Old Year!
With goodness crowned,
A Hand Divine hath set thy bound.

Welcome, New Year Which shall bring Fresh blessings from My God and King!

The old we leave without a tear; The new we hail without a fear.

> Because I know That o'er it all Rules He Who notes The sparrow's fall.

-author unknown selected from Poems For Memorization

THE PILGRIM is a religious magazine published in the interests on the members of the Old Brethren Church. Subscription rate: \$5.00 per year. Sample copies sent free on request.

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NEW YEAR PROSPECT

Traveling by car across Nevada there are low mountain ranges to cross. As you top a range you can see the straight road for miles ahead as it dips down into the valley and up the bare hills beyond. When we were young we would guess how many miles of road we could see till it would disappear over the next ridge.

Beginning to build a house, the young couple could look ahead, beyond the mud, concrete, and strewn boards, to a home of comfort and peace where they could rear their children and host their friends.

After Abraham was separated from Lot, God told him, "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth..." (Gen. 13:14-16)

The Brethren in Holland in 1729 looked to the New World for homes free from persecution. They braved the tedious and dangerous voyage across the Atlantic, trusting that God would give them a place. All these are views ahead to prospects of the future.

Around 1400 B.C., God had brought the Israelites from Egypt as far as Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran on the very southern threshold of the land of Canaan. Led by the pillar of fire and pillar of cloud, they were no longer a band of disorganized slaves. God had given them His law and His order of their traveling and their camping. Moses was established as leader. They were now ready to march into Canaan, and God told them to send spies to search out the land.

We too have come to a threshold of time with a view toward the future; a new year is before us. We cannot send spies into the new year, but by faith we can look ahead. We have been organized as people of God; our Leader is Jesus. God's Holy Spirit leads us by day and by night, and we have His Word.

As we look into this new unit of time, we have two choices offered us: (1.) We can move forward by faith, knowing that God is still with us and will never leave His own. Or (2.) We can look at the giant difficulties the year will surely bring and shrink back in fear and distrust.

The Israelites made the second choice, and the consequences were severe. The ten spies that brought the dismal report were slain. The congregation was sentenced to wander in the wilderness forty years (a year for each day the spies searched the land), and only their children with Caleb and Joshua (the two faithful spies) would be brought into the promised land. Neither was this the end of their rebellion. They tried to go into the land on their own and were beaten back. They continued to murmur and rebel against Moses and Aaron.

Our choice must be to move forward with confidence. We do not and cannot go into the new year by ourselves. Over and over, men have proven their inability to chart their own course. If human effort could improve this old world, it certainly would have been done by now. The prisons continue to overflow. Homes keep breaking apart. Reports of more murders and increased immorality are still increasing.

But God is now and will always be on the throne. His people are rearing solid families with faithful children. Young people are giving their hearts to God and finding new life. An increasing interest in obedience to God's Word is encouraging. God is working in His world, and each one who comes to Him can find a place of service. The natural beauties of this world

still shine and thrill us, but the prospect of a better place pleases us still more.

God's faithfulness has been proven. In spite of their folly, Israel reached Canaan. His promises to Abraham are still being fulfilled. He brought the brethren to the New World where they prospered and expanded. The young couple's house was finished, and even the Nevada road was traveled with safety.

As we look ahead into a new year we can trust our faithful God. We do not know exactly how His promises will be fulfilled in our lives. But we do know that His way is best for us; it is hazardous and foolish to take our own way. May we go forward in faith and trust, knowing that "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

Look ahead! Don't look behind! The prospect pleases; you will find God's faithful hand will see you through, And make a place and work to do.

Look ahead! Those gone before Are happy now on that bright shore. They filled their place and won the fight; We too can reach God's Heaven bright.

Look ahead! The view is good. We would not change it if we could; God's way, His will, is always best; To take our own won't give us rest.

Look ahead! This next new year Will surely bring its joy and tear, But God is on His throne of power; We need to trust His grace each hour.

Look ahead! The best, the joy Is yet to come. God will employ All ways and means and guiding hand To bring His people safe to land. -L.C.

SEWER ON TAP? "That from without defileth not a man."

The human body is a wonderful thing. It is able to take in food and liquid, and separate the usable elements from the harmful or useless. It then uses the good to continue life. The waste is discarded.

Jesus talked about this aspect in Matthew 15. He said, "Hear, and understand: Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man." The disciples didn't understand, and they asked Him what He meant. Then He told them how the body works, separating good from bad. He said evil actions that come out of a man defile a man, because they come from his heart.

He said this because the Pharisees and scribes found fault with the disciples for eating without washing their hands. We have some trouble with that at our house. Sometimes the children come to the table with dirty hands, and we require them to go wash them. Is that necessary? Did Jesus condemn washing for cleanliness? I don't think so. The washings they were talking about were for ceremonial purposes, an invention of the scribes. It says, "The Jews except they wash oft..." I understand they also had a certain way to do it. Jesus said it was ridiculous to think that a little dirt taken into the mouth would condemn us. The body is designed to handle it, but that doesn't mean we can handle any amount of dirt.

I believe we all realize that too much dirt, or too many germs, will overwhelm the body's filtering system, and it will get sick or maybe die. This is especially true for children, who don't have the immunity of adults. Therefore, we like to have fresh well water to drink. Even though we realize there are probably some impurities in that, the body seems to handle it

quite well. No matter what precautions you take, there are going to be some germs that enter the mouth.

Our houses are plumbed so that good clean water comes in, and waste or sewer water goes out. I understand that, with the proper processing, even sewer water can be made fit to drink. There are many good elements mixed with the bad. But it is unthinkable for us to put a U in the sewer line and have "sewer on tap" in our homes for us and our children to drink, figuring our bodies can pick out the good. We probably could handle a little bit without getting sick, but sooner or later, maybe in a period of stress, our body's filtering system would be overwhelmed, and we would get sick or die. We're not made to handle unlimited amounts of dirt. Dirt is something we try to be careful about, something we try to teach our children to be careful about.

Yet Jesus says that's not what really defiles a man in God's sight. It's what comes out of his heart: his actions, his speech, his thoughts. Where do the thoughts, speech, and actions of our hearts come from? Just like our natural bodies, our spiritual part is made up of what we take in. If we are careful about what our natural bodies take in, how much more important is that which our hearts (minds) take in! Jesus says that's where acceptance or condemnation comes from.

Just like our natural bodies, our spiritual bodies need a pure, fresh source of water to remain healthy. Our spiritual part is also able to filter out impurities. Yet our goal should be to take in pure things. This is especially true for our children, who do not have as much resistance, or immunity, to evil as adults. That's why we try to protect them from evil. That's why we have Christian schools. Paul writes in I Cor.15:33: "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." What we take into the spiritual man does affect what comes out.

Praying for the disciples just before His betrayal, Jesus said in John 17:15: "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of

the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." Shouldn't our prayer and goal for our children be the same? We can't take them out of the world (away from all evil), but we must keep them from all we can, lest they become sick or die.

There's plenty of pure, fresh water available, beginning with God's Word. In John 17:17 Jesus says, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." Truth is purity. There are also many books and periodicals that are based on God's Word, which are edifying and upbuilding to pure character.

But there are probably even more things available that are not edifying, but are degrading to the spiritual man. example, take the public information and entertainment media. Can we, by any stretching of the imagination, say it's not full of evil? I think it could be likened very well to a sewer line. Yes, there are some good things in it, but overall and throughout, it is evil. We might think we're strong enough to filter through it, Even if we think we can but what about our children? withstand it, when we're under stress or trial, the impurities we take in may tip the scales in the wrong direction, resulting in sickness or death. When we're talking spiritual sickness or death, it's serious indeed. Remember Paul says in I Cor. 15: "Be not deceived." Evidently, deception is involved (good mixed with evil). With plenty of pure water available, why try to purify a sewer line? Are we doing what we can to keep our children from the evil in the world if our children can take in evil by turning a knob, or a page, etc.?

Maybe it would be good for us as parents, especially as fathers, to look at our homes and see if we have "sewer on tap."

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report;---think on these things. (Phil. 4:8)

--Neil Martin New Paris, Indiana

THE FREE GIFT

Our family loves the Lord Who lives in Heaven above; Let's sing a song of praise to Him And honor God with love.

His gift is free to all; There is not cost to thee; Just seek Him, knock, and call, "Oh Lord, please come to me!"

Reject your sins and turn your thoughts To Christ our Brother there, Who goes to make a place for us In the firmament so fair.

So please, my friend, I ask of thee,
"What more contentment could there be?"
So, purge your soul for Jesus;
He will keep it pure for "free."
-- Jennifer Crowley, Spring Valley, California

EVERYONE'S ACCOUNT

Imagine you had a bank that each morning credited your account with \$1,440.00 -- with one condition: whatever part of the \$1,440.00 you failed to use during the day would be erased from your account, and no balance would be carried over.

What would you do? You would draw out every cent every day and use it to your best advantage.

Well, you do have such a bank, and its name is TIME. Every morning this bank credits you with 1,440 minutes. And it writes off as lost forever whatever portion you have failed to invest in a good purpose.

Selected from "Cappers Weekly" February 6, 1996 by Mary Ellen Lavy

SOMETIMES A LIGHT SURPRISES

Sometimes a light surprises the child of God who sings. It is the Lord Who rises with healing in His wings. When comforts are declining, He grants the soul again A season of clear shining to cheer it after rain.

In holy contemplation we sweetly then pursue
The theme of God's salvation, and find it ever new.
Set free from present sorrow, we cheerfully can say,
Let the unknown tomorrow bring with it what it may.

It can bring with it nothing but He will bear us through. Who gives the lilies clothing will clothe His people, too. Beneath the spreading heavens no creature but is fed, And He Who feeds the ravens will give His children bread.

Though vine and fig tree neither their wonted fruit should bear, Though all the fields should wither, nor flocks, nor herds be there,

Yet God, the same abiding, His praise shall tune my voice, For while in Him confiding, I cannot but rejoice.

by William Cowper selected by Rosanna Royer

MARRIAGE

ROYER -- FLORA Merrill Royer and Martha Flora were married December 7, at Wakarusa, Indiana.

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SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES: TIME

As we enter a new dimension of time in this universe in which we dwell, it is a reminder of what is taking place. Knowing that the Scriptures are the only true source of this knowledge, we can, with confidence, understand its purpose.

The World Book Encyclopedia defines time as something we all know about, but it is hard to tell exactly what it is. But we can measure time exactly, even if we do not know what it is.

One thing we know: time always changes in one direction. No matter how much we desire it, we can never return to the past.

Early man had only crude means of measuring time. He may not have had definite knowledge about years and months, but he did know that sunrise and sunset marked the beginning and ending of the day. He spoke of two days as two suns. When he wanted to tell about some events of a few months before, he spoke of something that happened so many moons ago. He measured the passage of time by its regular twenty-eight day cycle of the moon's appearance and disappearance. When he wanted to tell of something that happened farther back, he might speak of something that took place at the time of the big snow, or the flood, or the year of the big wind.

Time has come in to use as one way to measure vast distances of space. Astronomers measure the distance from the earth to various stars in terms of light years. A light year is the distance light travels in a year at the rate of 186,000 miles a second.

We know that man is able to measure distance and time accurately because of the created universe's precise order and movement, but this does not tell the purpose of time.

The question is - can time be defined? We believe it can, but only by the Source that created it.

We believe all creation is under the physical bondage of time. There is no power in the universe that can bypass the consequences of time, because God is the Source and had a purpose in creating time.

It is not to just "add another year" to history, but it is God's love to us -- that we may have the opportunity to be restored to His love and fellowship. The Scriptures reveal the urgency of this. The soul that refuses to accept this offer is missing the sole purpose of time.

The Scriptures warn us that the time of a man's life is the only opportunity we will have to be reconciled to God. Also, time itself is coming to an end when He returns to receive those into glory that used time for the purpose He gave it. Read II Peter chapter 3.

Therefore every moment of time extended to the human family is God's grace and mercy, with a stretched out arm, to receive us unto Himself, that where He is, we may be also.

Life is the time to serve the Lord.

The time to ensure the great reward.

And while the lamp holds out to burn,

The vilest sinner may return. (Isaac Watts)

-Kenneth Martin

HER SPECIAL MINISTRY

The salesman drew up before the plain white farmhouse, and, grabbing his briefcase, climbed from the car. He liked to think of himself as a missionary, sharing the Gospel as he sold his products.

He knocked on the door, then stood waiting, hoping that his double mission would be fruitful.

He was surprised when the door was opened by a woman dressed in plain garb with a cap on her head. This was a new stop for him, and the first that was a conservative home. He

really knew very little about these people, but he had heard they were loath to share their beliefs. He decided to try her.

He introduced himself, and showed her his wares. As she was looking over his products, he spoke: "Ma'am, I was wondering about something. Do you folks believe in missionary work? My church does a lot of that kind of work. In fact, I've spent several months in Africa, and I hope to go back again someday. I don't hear much about your type of people doing such things, though. Do you have such programs?

She hesitated a moment before speaking. "Some groups do. Our efforts are more individual, and closer to home, I guess. We believe our witness is very important, but we believe a quiet witness in the way we live is a great witness for God."

"But what about you?" He pressed. "Have you ever participated in a special ministry?"

A look of pain crossed her face, and she became thoughtful. Just then a shout came from behind the house, and she turned quickly, concern on her face.

Suddenly, little four year old Randy came running around the corner, grinning excitedly. She relaxed and smiled as he came trotting up to her, and displayed a moth, quite dead, with its wilted, pale green wings spread in a rather pathetic manner.

"What is it, mama? Isn't it pretty?" he bubbled.

"Yes, honey, it is. It's called a Luna moth."

"What's it for?"

She smiled. "Well...they pollinate things,..."

"Oh," he said, not quite sure what she meant, but already satisfied. Then he brightened again at a new and wonderful thought. "Did God 'giveth us richly all things to enjoy!?"

She chuckled at his childish attempt to apply the Scripture verse they had been memorizing. "Yes, honey, I'm sure He did!"

He grinned at her, then, with a shy glance at the stranger, ran off to find someone else to show it to.

She stood thoughtfully for a moment, pondering, then, looking up, smiling, she answered the man's question with confidence: "Yes, sir, I have participated in a special ministry!"

-- Martha Wagner, Gettysburg, Ohio

IAM

Behold, I am the living bread, And to all men I give, Myself, and all who will be fed, Eternally shall live.

> To all the world I am the light, A burning, shining flame, In sin's dark night, clear, strong, and bright, Through endless years the same.

I am the door, and if by Me, A man shall enter in, He shall be saved, and safe, and free, From darkness, death, and sin.

I am the Shepherd, true and good, And for my precious sheep, I give My life, I shed My blood, Their lives unharmed to keep.

I am, the resurrection, and He who believes on Me, Though he were dead shall rise and stand, In immortality.

> Eternal truth and life am I, I am the only way, To God; men's souls I sanctify, As they My Word obey.

I am the true, the living Vine, And every branch in Me, I purge and prune with touch divine, To grow more perfectly.

> --James Troyer, Lynchburg, TN Selected by Sharon See

FOR YOUTH: ARE YOU A LIGHTHOUSE?

How many have ever visited a lighthouse? Lighthouses have been an inspiration to us for a long time. It is difficult to pass up visiting one when we travel along the Oregon coast or any other coastline. They inspire us to be a reflection of the guiding light of God's truth, that our lives too, as a lighthouse, may seem to say, "Take care, stay away from Satan's pitfalls. Keep a good lookout and mind how you live, or you will be lost."

We desire this reflecting light to manifest the fruits of the Spirit: love (thinking and speaking no ill of others), joy (a genuine, heartfelt smile), peace (not taking offence: "Great peace have they which love Thy law and nothing shall offend them), longsuffering (when we have wronged no one deliberately to willingly suffer misunderstanding, forgive immediately and make it right), gentleness (speaking and acting in kindness), goodness (of God), faith (in God), meekness (thinking not highly of ourselves), temperance (exercising self-control). See Gal. 5:22-23.)

The following is a poem on a lighthouse painting one of our sisters, Annette Royer, painted and placed at the entry of our school which is still an inspiration to us as we see it each day hanging in our living room:

Father, let me be a lighthouse

On that Rock which shall endure;

My life a shining beacon

With light so strong and sure.

Let not that light be hidden

Or suffered to grow dim;

Come stormy day or darkest night,

Still let it shine for Him.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5:16)

--Betty Beery, Nappanee, Indiana

CHILDREN'S PAGE: CHRIST'S PATTERN

When mother cuts out a dress, does she just start cutting? No, she has a pattern for each piece. If the pattern is followed, the dress fits perfectly.

Jesus is our perfect pattern. He told us how to live. We also know by the example He showed. The example next to Jesus is young children. Young children, you are special to Jesus. You can teach us so much about Jesus. Jesus teaches us to love everyone. When someone gives you a piece of candy, it is easy to love them. What if someone takes your piece? Maybe everyone got a piece but you. We are to love no matter what happens.

When working outside, I noticed one of our grandsons would wave "Bye, Bye" to all the cars that went passed. In his small way he was saying, "I love you." This made me stop to think. He was happy with everyone. He loved everyone. Why can't big people do this? If someone hurts our feelings, we seem to ignore them and let them go past unnoticed. No, we can't even wave. Jesus says to be as children and be happy. If everyone gets a piece of candy but you, set a pattern: Love them and keep waving.

As you get older, there will be places where Satan will try to trick you. He hates Jesus. The old devil has nothing good to offer.

When David was watching his father's sheep, a lion and bear tried to eat the small lambs. David killed them and kept the lambs safe. Later David fought Goliath. He told the giant, "The battle is the Lord's. He will keep me safe from you." David set a pattern of trusting in the Lord.

At home, school, or wherever you are, you need to stand for what is right. Remember, the battle is the Lord's. He will see you through.

--Everett Oyler

Happy New Year! Another year is past, and subscriptions to *The Pilgrim* expire for some of our readers. We will not send notices because of our mailing method, but the date of expiration appears beside your name on the address label. It may be underlined or written in red to call attention if it is past due. Subscription rate is \$5.00 per year, and if you are receiving it free, please let us know if we should continue sending it.

We have had many faithful contributors over the past year, and we appreciate each one. Thanks to Bill Miller for supplying our address labels and to Sarah and Rhoda for typing, proofreading, and helping in general. Thanks to those who have donated financially and to any who prayed for this effort.

Please give us your suggestions for improving our publication, and consider writing or selecting material to print.

Best wishes for a blessed 1997!

-Leslie and Martha Cover

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THE PILGRIM

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"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." I Peter 2:11

NOW AND THEN

There were hours when life was bitter With the anguish of defeat, When strange it seemed that anything Had ever tasted sweet.

And we scarce knew how to bear it, But One came o'er the wave, And the peace He gave us with a word Then made us strong and brave.

There are hours when work is pressing,
Just little homely work
That must be done, that we must do,
That it were shame to shirk,
And in those hours full often,
To crown the petty cares,
Has fallen upon the house a gleam
Of God's Heaven unawares.

So, for our hallowed hours
We find them, where our Lord
Has called us into service meet
For blessing and reward,
They are sometimes in the closet,
They are often in the mart,
And the Lord can make them anywhere,
His "desert place apart."

-Margaret E. Sangster From Amos Baker's favorites THE PILGRIM is a religious magazine published in the interests of the members of the Old Brethren Church. Subscription rate: \$5.00 per year. Sample copies sent free on request.

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FLOOD

It's no fun to see angry water rise farther and farther and creep closer and closer to your home, enter your doors, and fill your house halfway up the windows. When the river staved within its banks, it made a pleasant boundary to the backyard. The summer heat was more endurable; the fishing was easy and But when the river pushes up out of its banks, it becomes a fearful monster with unforeseen power. Trees are uprooted from softened soil. Ugly gashes are cut across fields and roadways. Bridges are weakened and mobile homes swept away. It happened in California this year when warm torrential rains in the Sierras fell on several feet of fresh snow -- filling Don Pedro Reservoir to overflowing. The control of the huge dam, which in most years easily trapped the spring rains, was completely lost; and water poured unchecked down to flood much of the flat valley farmland and send lowland residents fleeing to higher ground.

Another kind of flood is spoken of in Revelation 12. The woman "clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars" brought forth a man child "who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron." The dragon was ready to devour this Child as soon as it was born, but He was caught up "unto God, and to his throne" and the woman fled into the wilderness. What a picture of the people of God, Jesus' birth, Herod's wrath, and God's protection! The result was war in heaven, with the devil and his angels cast out of heaven into the earth. Pictured vividly is Satan's wrath and the effective overcoming of him "by the blood of the lamb, and by the word of their testimony." For the "woman" was

provided a place of refuge "where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent."

"And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood." Seeing the high water damage this year, we take this to be no small stream. Here is power and destruction. Whatever the exact meaning, coming from the serpent's mouth, it cannot but be evil, filthy, anti-God. It reminds us of how the flood waters this year overwhelmed the Modesto City Sewer contaminating the water and carrying filth to the areas below.

We can speculate about what this flood is and just when it comes. Today we see a flood of violence, crime, and filth of immorality flashed before the eyes in living rooms around the world. Acres of printed material flow from filthy presses to contaminate the minds of readers. The world is going for this stuff. Verse 16 says, "And the earth helped the woman.... and swallowed up the flood..." How the world's appetite for Satan's filth could help the people of God is difficult to see except that with this whole picture of Satan's wrath has come an unconcern for neighbors as to how they live and what they do. "Live and let live" is an attitude that allows Christian people, if they will, to live Godly lives while around them swirls the muddy water of covetousness, sin, and self-indulgence.

God is able to protect His own. Just as Satan has many tricks, so the Lord has powerful answers -- shields or fortresses wherein His people can find refuge. Paul says that we are not ignorant of Satan's devices. We overcome today like they did in Revelation 12 -- "By the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony."

God brought the first civilization down with the Great Flood and saved Noah and his family. He ushered His people Israel out of Egypt and through the Red Sea where the Egyptians army was destroyed. Paul says that the fathers "were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." (Read all

of I Cor. 10 to see the warnings as well as the promises and potential of those in Christ.)

Peter writes that the waters of the Great Flood and God's saving of Noah are like the figure of baptism to us today. (I Pet. 3:21) He tells us it is not for the washing of the body, "(not the putting away of the filth of the flesh but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." The blood of Jesus, His victory over death, and His power in the world today are effective in the human heart against any operation of Satan.

In Isa. 41:10 (and throughout the Word) God tells His people "Fear thou not: for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." The song writer continues the thought:

When through the deep waters I call thee to go, The rivers of sorrow shall not overflow; For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless, And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

I have noticed that people tend to apply prophetic Scriptures to their own time and to their own people while perhaps ignoring the centuries of past history and the future. If Revelation 12 in its last verses does not apply exactly to our time, at least the principles are applicable. The chapter closes with this warning: "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Let us who fit this description be aware that there is a war on. And we have a refuge: Jesus Christ, the Rock of our salvation. He will win and bring to victory all who are His.

In Modesto, clean up and rebuilding have begun. Concerned neighbors, friends, and Christian workers from as far

away as Pennsylvania and Kentucky are mobilizing to help those whose homes were damaged by the high water.

In the spiritual realm, souls of men, women, and young people are being ravaged by the storms and floods of Satan. Let us move in where there is opportunity and need, to rescue and rebuild and point them to Jesus Christ, the refuge and God of our salvation. --L.C.

GOD'S METHODS

God's Word teaches us in many places that there should be harmony, peace, and unity, among God's people.

Phil. 3:16 says we should walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing.

Phil. 2:2 says we should be like-minded, have the same love, be of one accord, of one mind.

Eph. 4:3 implores us to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

I believe all serious believers desire to have these conditions in their lives and in the church, Yet if we look around among those of us who are called the "plain people," we see much confusion, strife, and disharmony. These are not Christian virtues and should not be among us.

I am sure that most times when there are differences among believers, both sides have valid concerns and truly desire to build and maintain God's kingdom. It seems that often when there is strife and division, we tend to deal with the symptoms rather than to get to the root of the matter.

For instance, the Word clearly teaches modesty, simplicity in dress, and separation from the World. If there is a problem with this, it goes much deeper than the clothing and will not be resolved by just getting the right clothing on the outside.

In Ephesians, just a few verses before the one on the unity of the Spirit, the Apostle implores us to let Christ dwell in our hearts by faith. He also says we should be rooted and grounded in love, and that we should be filled with the fullness of God. If we have a vital, growing relationship with our Savior, we certainly will not want to do anything to displease Him. Nor will we want to do anything to cause one we love to stumble or fall.

When there is confusion and strife, or we feel ill will toward our brother, we need to realize that we have serious heart trouble. If we plead earnestly with the great Physician, He will heal us of these conditions and fill our hearts with love, compassion, and tenderness to one another.

It is basic to our nature to resist if someone tries to make us do something, However if we know someone loves us even to the point of being willing to suffer for us and with us, it breaks down this resistance and causes us to want to please them. The Word tells us that the greatest of all powers is love. If someone is erring and they cannot be reached by love, then there is no power or tool available that will reach them.

I believe the greatest hindrance God encounters among us is our unwillingness to give up our selfish wills and let His love fully rule in our hearts. Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Every time we feel inclined to criticize and find fault with someone, we should instead pray for him; and then pray that the Lord will increase our love for him. Pray also for the Lord's help to encourage him, and build him up. I believe if we would diligently do this, confusion, strife, and ill will would disappear among us, and the true unity of the Spirit would shine more clearly to those around us.

If we would be a light to those around us, and a guide to our children, it will require submission to God's Spirit, earnest prayer, and unreserved love for one another. From time to time, in various ways, Assembled groups attempt to show Christ's doctrines true -just what He says-And tell to man, which way to go.

You must wear that. You can't have this. Attempting, trying, many a time, To regulate whereat truth is, To guide men's way to Heaven's clime.

And rules increase, and struggles show; Confusion comes, and strifes abound. Christ came to show the way to go. What's wrong, when in this state we're found?

Now 'tis important what we wear, And what we have, and where we go. A testimony here we bear, With all these things, to others show--

What we believe, if God we serve.
These outward things, show what's within.
A yielded heart, will truth observe,
Will flee from things, that lead to sin.

The problem here is with the heart; 'Tis here the issue must be met. From sin within, we must depart, If in this life we'd vic'try get.

If one who errs, we would restore, We must get close and touch his heart. The key is love that will restore, Not rules and strife that drive apart. A true concern will not cause strife, But teach and gently lead the way. For force can't bring a vital life, But meek submission to His way.

Through us He'll work, if we submit, And let His Spirit have His way. If each of us will do his bit, Through us He'll change some hearts today.

And then a light will others see: God's Spirit working in our life. "Tis that which causes hearts to flee From sin, to find eternal life.

-James Beery

SELF AND EFFECTIVE SERVICE

Paul was a prisoner at Rome, no longer free to travel from city to city spreading Christ's Gospel and establishing churches. His thoughts and prayers were often with those infant believers. His heart was burdened for their spiritual success and safety in face of distractions and dangers, How were they getting along? Sometimes he would send someone to visit that could bring back a report of their struggles, defeats, and victories.

Such thoughts were on his heart as he penned the inspired letter to the Philippians. Paul couldn't go. Who could he send? In his letter he named Timothy. Timothy would see how they were doing and, more importantly, give them spiritual encouragement as well.

Why did he choose Timothy from his group of helpers? There were surely others he could have asked. Phil. 2:20,21 answers this question, and leaves us with a challenge. "For I

have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state, For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's." There was no one else who shared so closely the burden and love Paul had (Phil. 1:7,8). None of the others had the same degree of zeal, affection, genuine concern, and selfless service.

Who were these others left unchosen for this service? They weren't evil men. They were Christians. Paul referred to them in his closing remarks as the "brethren which are with me." We are not given details about them, but evidently they too often chose for themselves. There seemed to be a certain lack that hindered their effectiveness when compared with the sterling character of Timothy.

Would we be most like Timothy or these others Paul referred to? Do we sometimes show lacks that affect our service: a Sunday afternoon nap instead of visiting a discouraged brother, a feeble excuse for missing a church service, preferring a visit to the library over joining those handing out tracts, or struggling inwardly over an offering amount? Are the "things of Jesus Christ" our first interest?

Selfishness affects our outreach in opportunity and quality. Opportunities for effective service come with whole-hearted commitment. Lovers of Christ are cheerful givers of time, testimonies, and funds.

Selfishness affects the churches where we fellowship. Individual Christians contribute to the spiritual vitality of the whole. Fervent brethren and sisters strengthen a congregation.

Paul sent the most effective. He selected Timothy. Could he have chosen me or you? How are we doing where we are?

-Selected by David Royer from Christian Light Publications

Merrill Royer's address:

64714 C.R. 17,

Goshen Indiana, 46526

The following article is selected by a young sister with evident concern for young people whether considering marriage or not. It describes the practices of the Hutterite brethren in courtship. If we cannot exactly copy the details of such a supervised courtship as is described, at least we can see, admire, and practice the devotion to Christ and desire for purity in this vital experience. -L.C.

MARRIAGE IS NO GAME (A Hutterite Perspective) By Johann C. Arnold

The ages of thirteen to twenty-one are critical. These are the years when the desire for the opposite sex awakens. It is typical of the immaturity of this age to "fall in love," first with one, and then another, like a bee going from flower to flower, The young person is searching for the right one. This is why the advice of parents and ministers should be sought. We must not, as occasionally happens, let the young people close themselves off. They need to be able to share their hearts.

Prior to the teen years, ministers and parents must implant in children a reverence for the church and for their parents. Teaching these Biblical values should begin in the cradle and be reinforced by adult example. To bring up our children in the fear of God is our primary taşk. On this basis our young people will face sin in the world and naturally ask advice from parents and ministers who have maintained a close relationship with them since childhood.

While the attraction to the opposite sex is natural, it is hardly a basis for founding a Christian family. I'm sure that the choice of the right partner is not based on erotic attraction. That is just an immature infatuation. The choice should be one in which both partners are *sure* that through this relationship both will be led closer to Jesus. *Young people, hold this in your hearts.* God will bless such an engagement and marriage.

The church, therefore, needs to appoint responsible couples to support and encourage young people just at these crucial moments. The parents must be in very close contact with their children. The young people have to realize that there is nothing they need to be ashamed of discussing with their minister or parents. The father should not only be a father to his son, but also a comrade and a friend. The same is true for the mother and her daughter. Young people need someone to confide in, especially when struggling with sexual issues.

While an attraction to the opposite sex is natural, it is hardly a basis for founding a Christian family.

What happens in our Hutterite communities when two young people are led to marriage? Do we allow boyfriend and girlfriend relationships? These are questions we are often asked.

To answer this I need to assume an understanding of the Biblical principals of Christian marriage and faithfulness (till death parts you); of adultery and divorce as sin; of the role of the non-dominating husband who, as the head of the family, leads the submitting wife in all that is good and godly. If our lives are based on the words in Matthew: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness: and all these things shall be added unto you," then marriage becomes an undeserved gift of grace. What a blessing it is when a brother asks help and counsel to find a wife.

Words like dating, boyfriend, and girlfriend have no place in our vocabulary. We cannot allow young people to pair off or form exclusive relationships. These boundaries are clearly set and respected from early childhood through adulthood. Their longing should be to have Christ at the center of their lives and nothing else. Here lies the foundation for future engagement and marriage among our young brothers and sisters. Here also is the basis for unmarried members to find fulfillment in the faithfulness of a celibate life.

If a young brother is attracted to a sister, he should first test it for a time to see whether this feeling is merely a fleshly attraction, a straw fire, or whether there is something deeper at work. If he feels the latter is true, he should let his parents know. If the parents also see such a future relationship as a real possibility, the next step for the brother is to go to the minister, whose primary question to the brother will be, will this relationship lead both of you closer to Christ?

If the question can be answered in the affirmative, the minister then suggests that the brother contact the sister's father to ask his permission to correspond with his daughter. This correspondence will go through the minister. We encourage our young people in this situation to share their letters with their parents and to ask for advice, as parents usually have a wealth of experience that can be shared at such a time. This will lead parents and children very close together.

This correspondence should be nonbinding, strictly as brother to sister, with no writing about love or belonging together. Letters should not begin with romantic language. This non-committing correspondence, in which the two share with each other what the church is experiencing, will be a test whether the love for that person is deeply founded or whether it is like a straw fire that burns brightly for a short time and then dies out.

(to be continued) -- Selected by Susanna Tate Bremen, Indiana

BIRTHS

CABLE -- A son, Jonathan Lavern, born January 10, to Aaron and Arlene Cable of New Paris, Indiana.

OBERHOLZER -- A daughter, Amber Noel, born January 28, to Shane and Beth Ann Oberholzer of New Paris, Indiana.

THE PILGRIM

FOR YOUTH: WORRY WARTS

What must it look like for the Lord to see Us little creatures on the earth so wee Worrying and fretting o'er the weather to come? Or whether we'll ever get our work done?

Whether we've got enough money to pay
For the tax return that came that day,
For the horse that's lame and the child that's sick;
Will there be enough money to pay it quick?

Will my child be good today--at last So that I can get my work done fast? Will it rain or snow so that we cannot Go to the city as we had thought?

Will the basement leak and flood again So that all our effort was wasted pain? If I'd hang my wash on the line outside Would it, for sure, get thoroughly dried?

Why worry so much 'bout the things you've not And be so fretful 'bout the things you've got? Do the sparrows worry, and fret, and cry When they've got no food and are going to die?

If the Father cares so much for the birds Should He not care for you, much more than words? For He hears every word each time you cry, And He will surely your needs supply.

> --Marlene J. Hilty New Madison, Ohio

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES: THE RIGHT SCOREKEEPER

It is rather a sobering thought to know that many who claim to know the Scriptures unto salvation, will someday be rejected by its authority. Jesus, dealing with this, said, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye *think* ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." (John 5:39) He was telling this to a people that claimed to have perfect knowledge of the Scriptures, but were rejecting Him. Jesus exposed their ignorance and said if they had known the Scriptures they would acknowledge Him.

Jesus also said, "Not everyone that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46)

The Scriptures, revealing the judgment scene, point to two characteristics of fallen humanity that cannot dwell in the physical presence of God: pride and slothfulness. In man's struggle for preeminence, there is no better field than professed Christianity for self-exaltation. No form or garment can, in itself, keep us from being proud.

Humility has a form and garment, and wears it to glorify God. Pride has no problem to wear the same, to exalt and magnify self-esteem and personal advantage.

We believe this is what Jesus addressed when He told them someday some would hear, "I never knew you, depart from me, ye that work iniquity." They were trying to impress Jesus with all the great things they had done in His name. They wanted to be their own scorekeeper, and by this they revealed their ignorance of the Scriptures.

The Scriptures call the Christian to be a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is our reasonable service. This, fulfilled, will qualify us for eternal life.

When Jesus returns, all nations will be called before Him, and He will divide as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats, the sheep on the right side and the goats on the left. Those on the right side pass the test of sacrificial living: "For I was hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me." Their response proved their humble service and faithfulness in sacrificial living; they had the right scorekeeper.

Those on the left tried to claim innocence, but to no avail, and were sentenced, by eternal truth, to everlasting punishment.

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

(II Tim. 2:15)

-Kenneth Martin

CHILDREN'S PAGE: A LESSON FROM A BLIND GIRL

The door of my store opened; a little girl came in holding her mother's hand. She looked like any other five or six year old girl except for one thing, In her other hand she carried a long white stick which she moved back and forth in front of her as she walked. She was blind.

Soon her mother let go of her hand and began to shop for fabric. The little girl walked around by herself, but she didn't run into anything because she always felt ahead with the stick. Before long she discovered the toy corner. I don't know how she knew the toys were in there. Perhaps she felt them between the pickets of the fence. She asked if someone would help her open the gate, so her mother went and opened it. The little girl walked in, put down her stick, and began to play. The toys were scattered around on the floor but she was careful and didn't stumble over them. Then her mother said, "There's a big

basket over in the corner. Why don't you pick up the toys and put them in it?"

What do you think the little girl said? Do you think she whined and fussed and said it was too hard because she couldn't see the toys or the toy basket? No, she didn't. She said, "Okay!" very cheerfully and began to pick them up. She felt each one until she knew what it was, then put it into the basket.

The next time you feel like complaining when your mother asks you to pick up the toys, just think how much easier it is than if you were blind, and do it cheerfully.

MY EYES

A great gray elephant,
A little yellow bee;
A tiny purple violet,
A tall green tree;
A red and white sailboat
On a blue sea;
All these things You gave to me
When You made my eyes to see.
Thank you, God! -Author unknown
-Jean Martin
Goshen, Indiana

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"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." I Peter 2:11

ART THOU WEARY; ART THOU LANGUID?

Art thou weary; art thou languid; Art thou sore distressed? "Come to Me," saith One, "and coming Be at rest."

Hath He marks to lead me to Him If He be my Guide?
"In His feet and hands are wound-prints,

And His side."

Is there diadem, as Monarch,
That His brow adorns?

"Yea, a crown, in very surety;

But of thorns."

If I find Him, if I follow, What His guerdon (reward) here? "Many a sorrow, many a labor,

Many a tear.

If I still hold closely to Him,

What hath He at last?

"Sorrow vanquished, labor ended,

Jordan passed."

If I ask Him to receive me,

Will He say me nay?

"Not till earth, and not till heaven

Pass away."

Finding, following, keeping, struggling,

Is He sure to bless?

"Saints, apostles, prophets, martyrs, Answer, 'Yes.'"

--St. Steven, the Sabaite, 8th Century

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FAR REACHING DEATH OF JESUS

My grandfather used to say as he surveyed a mountain of broken boulders, "These rocks were likely broken when the Saviour died!" His faith seemed to us boys so real and vivid. The Bible says (Matt. 27:51,52): "And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose..." Jesus, the Son of God, was dying on the cross for the sins of the world, and the physical world reacted with violent convulsions. It is possible that the upheavals did reach around the world even into this Western Hemisphere, for the event was of world-wide importance. No place on earth is remote enough to escape the judgment of Almighty God, and no place is too far away to be excluded from His mercy.

Simultaneous with broken boulders came results even more momentous and far-reaching. Rev. 4 and 5 describes a scene before God's throne. John saw in the Lord's hand a book sealed with seven seals. The question was proclaimed, "Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?" John wept much when he realized that there was no one in heaven or in earth able to open the book or even look at it! One of the elders then told John not to weep -- that one had been found -- "the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David" who had prevailed to loose those seven seals. When this mighty one appeared, it was "a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." As this mighty One took the book, there arose a new song of praise: "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and

hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." Talk about far-reaching effects!

As we read the succeeding chapters in Revelation describing the opening of those seven seals, it seemed that they represent the scope of human history and future events. Could it be that time and opportunity would have stopped then if this Savior could not have prevailed and opened the book?

No other event or person has made such an impact. Words such as "impact" are too weak and entirely insufficient to describe the work of Jesus. It means eternal life or death to us and all mankind.

If this atoning death shook the earth from pole to pole, and if its impact reached all people of the world, one more question remains! Has it reached into our hearts? The human heart, in its own way, has become far distant from God. This heart without Christ is described by Jeremiah (17:9) as "...deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Without a Saviour this wicked heart condemns us to death. Eph. 2:13 gives us hope: "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Jesus' death reaches even to the depths of the human heart. What remains now is for the heart to respond and open to Jesus' atonement and new life.

Have you heard the thunder rumbling from the cross of Calvary?

Have you seen the rocks abreaking as Christ died upon the tree?

See it reaches 'cross the oceans, this salvation that He gave And His blood atones for sinners and for all He came to save. Has your heart been touched by fire that began when Jesus died?
Has the Holy Spirit reached you?
Have you seen Christ crucified?

Will you magnify this Savior by a life that's hid with God? Will you praise His name and thank Him? Will you bow or feel His rod?

If you now return to Jesus
And accept His pard'ning grace,
You may live with Him in Glory
where in Heaven you have a place.

-LC.

RISE GLORIOUS CONQUEROR

Rise, glorious Conqueror, rise
Into Thy native skies;
Assume Thy right;
And where in many a fold
The clouds are backward rolled,
Pass through those gates of gold,
And reign in light.

Victor o'er death and hell,
Cherubic legions swell
The radiant train:
Praises all heaven inspire;
Each angel sweeps his lyre,
And claps his wings of fire,
Thou Lamb once slain.
--Matthew Bridges

NOAH THE BUILDER: LESSONS FOR US

Noah is 500 years old when he appears in Genesis. We don't know about the early years of his life. Enoch was his great-grandfather who escaped death by being translated into heaven. (Gen. 5:22-24; Heb. 11:5) Methuselah was his grandfather who was the oldest living man recorded in the Bible. (Gen. 5:25-27) Lamech was his father who must have been a devout man of God.

The name "Noah" is believed to mean "rest." (Gen. 5:29) Noah lived in a time when there was much wickedness on the earth. Men had already forgotten God and were going their own ways, "thinking evil in their hearts continually." This is why God decided that He wanted to destroy the wicked men and start over. Gen. 6:8,9: "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord."

So God told Noah what He was going to do and what He wanted out of Noah. God wanted Noah to build this huge Ark, or ship, that would house Noah's family and certain animals. Assuming that the ancient cubit = 21 inches, the dimensions would have been 525 ft. long, 87 ft. wide, and 52 ft. tall. This surely seemed an impossible task to Noah!

Despite the enormity of the task, Noah set to work, obeying God with great faith and strength, surrounded by laughter, scoffers, and unbelief. It took him years to finish, possibly 100 years. (Gen. 7:6) He kept on building, believing that God meant what He had said. I'm sure he warned the people and exhorted them to believe. (II Pet. 2:5) That's one way we build our own faith.

Would YOU have been able to do this? Building a ship on dry ground, taking years to finish, surrounded by scoffers and mockers? What lessons can we derive from this? One is the importance of being in close communion with the Lord so we will hear Him when He speaks to us. Only in this way can we know His will for us. Another is that true faith generates work. Faith instills the desire to work for Him. Another is that man's reasoning fails in the face of God's reasoning. We cannot always understand every aspect of His commands or of His Word. Another is that despite the adversity, we keep on. We don't let the world dim our spiritual sight. We see something they don't see, and that something is another kingdom. Our ministry is to preach, teach, and live as our own Lord and Saviour did.

So, in comparing the Ark with the Church today, we find ourselves in much the same situation as Noah. Jesus has told us, "Go ye...teach...baptize...observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you..." (Matt. 28:19,20) His Church is not a building, but all people who believe in Christ and prove their belief by obedience to His Word and His Work.

Are we builders? Are we working? Do we exhort the scoffers and mockers? Do we warn them? One person is a small particle of the Church, but each person is great, is called of God, and is given power and strength to do his part in the spiritual building of the Church.

This ark of His New Testament, the Church, offers protection, help, fellowship, and life. Some day soon this door will be opened and all His faithful people will enter the heavenly city -- New Jerusalem -- and eternal life with Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. "And He carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a jasper stone, clear as crystal." (Rev. 21:10,11)

ARE WE BUILDING?

Are we building
On the Rock, the Head of man?
Once broken and forsaken;
Then ever reigning in heaven,

Sitting at His Father's right hand. Are we building for Him, or man?

Are we building
Distinct walls embracing all
Once broken and forsaken?
Now joy in separation
As Pilgrims in a sinful land.
Are we building for Him, or man?

Are we building?
The ceiling, it is heaven;
For our poor prayers to ascend,
For our hairs to be numbered.
To reach the heights that He intends,
To shrink the weights that we pretend.

Are we building
Grasping the tools provided?
Inviting those indited
Into sin's pleasure prison;
Proclaiming the joy He's given
From the single fact, He's risen!

Are we building?
Is it we, or is it He?
For the vast work to proceed,
Our carnal self must recede.
Building part of His Church, not ours,
A part of His Body, not ours.

"For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. (I Cor. 3:9)
--Ron Cable, Goshen, Indiana

MARRIAGE IS NO GAME (A Hutterite Perspective) by Johann C. Arnold (continued)

After several months of corresponding, and with the advice of ministers and agreement of the parents, the brother will receive permission to meet with the sister. They may then go for walks together, not holding hands, kissing, or embracing. If the young people wish to pray together during this time, that should be encouraged. Should two young people go beyond this direction and break this trust, their friendship should be immediately terminated until there is real repentance.

Such meetings should continue for several months, so that the two young people can really get to know each other inwardly and have a foundation on which later to build their married life. This cannot be rushed. Like a flower it must be left to open in God's time. If a flower is forced to open in hopes of an early bloom, it is destroyed. The same is true of this relationship.

Since "love" can be blinding and misleading, it can happen that two young people realize that their relationship is not bearing good fruit, does not bring both partners closer to Christ, or brings doubts and torments. Should this be the case, it is best to end the relationship. Even though there has been no commitment, this is painful; but a painful end is better than pain without end.

Only when both young people, independently of each other, but together with parents and minister, feel assured that they belong together, will the brother receive permission to ask the sister to become engaged and married. If both agree, the brother can have the freedom to give the sister a short kiss on the cheek. We warn against a kiss on the lips, which could arouse both partners sexually, and lead to sin. They may hold hands, but there should be no hugging or embracing. This

simply is not fitting for an engaged couple; they would be playing with fire and with powers much greater than themselves.

It is the responsibility of parents and ministers to lay on the hearts of young people the need for self discipline in physical contact during engagement. The brother should take the lead in this. The minute the brother or the sister feels sexually stimulated through holding hands or the chaste kiss, they should see it as a red-warning sign and stop. Otherwise their marriage will begin with burdened consciences that will take decades to heal.

When the relationship has come to this point it should be brought before the church. At the time of an engagement in the Hutterian Church, the minister speaks these important words after he has publicly asked the couple the engagement questions:

Now that you both have given your consent, we bear witness before the church that you are now an upright engaged couple who have the blessing of your parents and the elders of the church. You should also ask the Lord that He may conclude it in the honour of His name, if it is His divine will.

There is also the wonderful blessing pronounced at a Hutterite wedding:

I bear you witness that you marry as an upright and devout couple. May God, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, bless you and lead you in your life, and keep you together in His peace, in His love, and in His strength. This I ask for you in the Name of Jesus. Amen.

The marriages of these couples in our communities who were humble enough to follow the advice of the elders bore good fruit. The marriages of those couples who thought they knew better, and acted in secret, bore evil fruit.

Try to grasp the spirit of what I have written and not the letter of the law. We teach our young people the importance of and the joy of submitting to the church and freely seeking advice and help. Submission is also the basis of marriage. At each wedding an old marriage teaching based on the fifth chapter of Paul's letter to the Ephesians is read. This is probably the oldest Hutterian teaching. It speaks again and again about the true joy of submission. In this corrupt time let us do all we can to help our young people find the true freedom found only in Christ.

--Selected by Susanna Tate Bremen, Indiana

COMMUNION MEETING NOTICE

We, the members of the Eastern District of the Old Brethren have appointed April 26 and 27, the Lord willing, for our spring Lovefeast at our meeting house near Wakarusa, Indiana. We extend a hearty welcome to all our members and friends to attend and worship with us.

--Melvin Coning

BAPTISMS Eastern Congregation

Victor, Gail, and Crystal Storkel February 23, 1997

May they ever be true to the One who brought life and salvation to all who will faithfully serve Him.

BIRTHS

COVER -- A son, (Benjamin) Levi, born February 12, to Ben and Jolene Cover of Tuolumne, California.

CABLE -- A son, Justin Loyd, born February 28, to Larry and Liana Cable of Trotwood, Ohio.

"REPENT AND BE BAPTIZED"

I stand at the edge of the water And wonder if worthy I be. To follow the steps of my Savior Who stands by the water with me.

I kneel in the midst of the water, A heart that's repentant and clean; And wonder what living for Jesus And dying to all else should mean.

I am down in the depths of the water Knowing His death made me whole. As the torrent flows over my body. Oh! The joy that floods into my soul.

I breathe as I rise from the water, Thrice for Father and Spirit and Son. And my prayer is a life of surrender Where, in truth, with my brethren I'm one.

I now come up out of the water, And with heaven I'm in one accord. May each step I now take result in All glory and praise to my Lord.

> --Hidden in Christ, Gail J. Storkel

THE LOVE OF MONEY I Timothy 6:10 --by Willard Yoder

I don't have a love for money, Just the things that money buys, Not for currency or coinage, But the pleasures it supplies.

I detest the greed of others For great stores of cherished gold, But I love what it can purchase, And the things my hands can hold.

I don't have a yen for dollars We must hide from thieves and fire But I love their strength to gather All that my heart may desire.

Foolish man, The love of money, Or the love of earthly things, Have alike the power to hinder The sweet peace contentment brings.

-Selected by Norman L. Cable Goshen, Indiana

Jesus Christ is risen today, Our triumphant holy day; Who did once upon the cross Suffer to redeem our loss. Hallelujah!

-- From a Latin hymn of the fifteenth century

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES: FEAR OR NO FEAR

The Scripture has much to say about man's mental attitude in response to God and to our fellowmen. Our mental attitudes are visible and verbal. They are acts and words communicated to God and one another that convey a message of acceptance or rejection.

Love is an absolute requirement of those that claim to know God. Our mental attitudes and words must support our deeds, to prove this. Love and fear are often used together. Love without fear has no eternal value. Love without fear is of short duration, and is a product of the flesh. When a relationship that God has called us to is severed, we can rest assured that the fear of God is absent from one or both parties.

A few days ago I was following a young man in his sports car, and in bold letters, on the rear window was written, "No Fear." I believe this was a threat to his fellowmen.

The fear of God is the only power that can restrain the flesh and make it a fit place for the Holy Spirit. To fear God is not to feel threatened by Him, but it proves that we know that we are powerless and helpless without Him -- life itself could not be had without His presence. We know that it is in Him that we live and move and have our being. Some day He will call us from this scene, and there is no way to escape. Neither do we want to, if we have a reverential fear of Him.

The Scriptures also tell us what *not* to fear: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matt. 10:28) The only way this Scripture can be proved is with the power of love in our response to those that would wrong us or separate themselves from us, or even take our life. All vengeance or retaliation stems from fear.

The Christian is boldly declaring "no fear" as he suffers in the flesh in honor to his Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

-- Kenneth Martin

CHILDREN'S PAGE: DOORS

What are doors? They are parts of the wall between two rooms. They will open and close. They allow us to go from one room to another. Doors are important. When you are small, someone needs to open the door for you. Mother and Father will do this. But when you get older, there are certain doors that only you can open.

The first door is obedience to parents. Only you can open this door. Satan is on the other side trying to hold it shut. When the door to obedience is opened, Satan is losing his battle.

Jesus is standing at our heart's door and knocking. If you are obedient to your parents, it will be easier to obey Jesus, and open your heart door to Him.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego had a door to open. They chose to open the door of obedience to God. Therefore they were kept safe.

I know a young girl that has opened the door to Jesus. Her brother is planning to marry a woman that is divorced. His parents have taught him right from wrong. He knows what he is about to do is wrong. His sister told him, "Stop seeing her. I want to see you in Heaven. I will be there."

Truly we can see why Jesus said, unless we become as little children we cannot enter Heaven. Always keep the door of obedience open.

-Everett Oyler

HELLO, NEW YEAR

Hello, New Year
I love the warm sun,
I like to see the
Rabbits run.

Good-bye Old Year It's time we part And now we say I have Jesus in my heart.

by Jonathan E. Miller, age 10 -- Salida, California

FOR THE YOUTH: A LETTER PARAPHRASE OF OUR SAVIOUR'S LOVE

Dear Friend,

How are you? I just had to send you this letter to tell you how much I love and care about you.

I saw you yesterday as you were walking with your friends. I waited all day long, hoping you would talk to Me also. As evening drew near, I gave you sunset to close your day, and a cool breeze to rest you, and I waited. You never came. Oh, yes, it hurt Me, but I still love you because I am your friend.

I saw you fall asleep last night and I longed to touch your brow, so I spilled moonlight on your pillow and face. Again I waited, wanting to rush down so we could talk. I have so many gifts for you. You awakened and rushed off for the day... My tears were in the rain.

Today you looked so sad, so alone. It makes My heart ache because I understand. My friends let Me down and hurt Me many times, too, but I love you. I try to tell you in the quiet green grass, I whisper it in the colors of the flowers, breathe it in the breeze and trees. I shout it in the mountains and streams and give the birds love songs to sing. I clothe you with the sunshine, and perfume the air. My love for you is deeper than the oceans and bigger than the biggest want or need you ever had. If you want we can spend eternity together in heaven.

I know how hard it is. I really know (because I was there) and I want to help you. My Father wants to help too. He's that way, you know. Just call Me, ask Me, talk to Me. It is your decision. I have chosen you because of this. I will wait. Because I love you, as long as you have breath on this earth, I will hope for you to come. *Please come soon!*

Your Friend, JESUS

I ran across this letter in our family Bible and I thought, how true it is that Jesus waits each day to talk with us, and how sad He is when we forget or are too busy. It's so easy to pick up the telephone and talk to a friend for an hour or two, but how often do we sit down for a couple hours, and talk to the greatest Friend of all, the Saviour Who died for our redemption? Friend, He is waiting for you just as He says in the letter above. When I'm sad and lonely, Jesus is always there to cheer me up. He will do the same for you, if you just ask Him. The song says:

There is not a friend like Jesus, Patient, tender, kind, and true, If you'll be a friend to Jesus, He will be a friend to you.

> --Emily Brubaker Nappanee, Indiana

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THE PILGRIM

VOL. 44 APRIL, 1997 No. 4
"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." I Peter 2:11

LEAVE IT ALL IN JESUS' HAND

Do you wonder why the blessing That you prayed for is delayed, While others seem to get theirs Before request is made? It's not for us to understand, But leave it all in Jesus' hand.

Do you wonder why your loved one Was taken home to stay, While other folks were left here Who are "only in the way"? It's not for us to understand, But leave it all in Jesus' hand.

Do you wonder why you suffer pain, While others are so healthy, Or why you have to skimp and save While other folks are wealthy? It's not for us to understand, But leave it all in Jesus' hand.

Just lean upon the Saviour;
Just rest at His dear feet;
His strength will prove sufficient
For the testing you must meet.
It's not for us to understand,
But leave it all in Jesus' hand.
--From Alma Garber's collection

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UP AND DOWN

If we are absolutely honest, I suppose all of us could confess to having times and experiences that are not as good as they should be. I John 1:8 reminds us: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." He also gives us the remedy (verse 9): "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

As we have our "down" times, we also have times of close fellowship with God. We experience the blessings of walking with the Savior and feeling the Holy Spirit's influence. I John 1:7 describes this blessedness: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

The question came up recently: Is this fluctuating pattern of "up and down," God's will for us? I suppose some could say that we appreciate God's forgiveness and grace more when we experience times of darkness and distance from Him. But is it God's will that we *ever* walk in selfishness or sin? No, God wants to give us victory. His standard is nothing short of perfection and holiness. We are admonished by Peter to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Surely this pattern of steady growth pleases God more than our "lows and highs."

It should not be a question in our minds whether or not God wants us to sin. Over and over God's Word calls us to righteousness: "Come unto me..." "Draw nigh to God..." "Be ye holy, for I am holy." "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not." Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them through thy word..." We know God can forgive and restore,

but how much better to *not* transgress, but to walk faithfully in His ways!

Some Christians who have come up from "the gutter" and experience God's grace seem to have a better testimony than those who have not wandered so far away. Their love to God, their thanksgiving, their magnifying of God's mercy, abound to God's glory. This is fitting and right. But should we credit the gutter? If that is so, should we all go through it that we, too, might have a better testimony?

Paul seems to have some of this in mind in Romans 3:7,8: "For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner? And not rather (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just." In Romans 6:1,2 he questions: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" "The gutter" should not get credit for the manifold grace of God. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

Paul himself became the useful vessel that he was after he had been a persecutor of the church. But was this the reason for his devotion, his thanksgiving, his committing of his life wholly to God? His testimony in this area he gives in I Cor. 15:9,10: "For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

God's grace is sufficient. He can forgive and restore and give marvellous gifts to His children. But how much better it is to not stray! "Sow your wild oats," and "Get lost," is not only poor but perilous advice.

I have read that a field of corn (and all growing things), if it becomes dry and the leaves curl, can never quite recover what it would have been if its moisture and nutrition had been constant. Perhaps it is somewhat like this in our Christian lives. We all suffer dry times, but they are not good for us. The marvellous part is that God can forgive, cleanse, and sanctify. He is not limited to the patterns of the corn field. If He wills to take a repentant sinner and make him an effective worker for Him, He does it! If He allows us to go through low times and then give all the more gratitude for deliverance, He will. But let us not credit our mistakes and selfishness, but His abounding grace.

In the end, we know that sin is sin. There are no good ones. All have sinned and come short of God's glory. Perhaps some who have not gone so far into evil, are not as aware of the gift of God's grace as are some who have gone to the bottom. May we all rejoice in the grace of God, and be more like our Savior.

ABOUNDING GRACE

God's grace abounds to sinners chief, The sly, the cold, the sneak, the thief, All who will come to seek God's grace Will find in Christ a hiding place.

No sin is good, no failure right. God reaches down; He sees our plight. He wants us steadily to grow; A witness true to others show.

So seek His will; do not "get lost," Perhaps we do not count the cost Of wild oats sown, of wasted hours, Of playing with the devil's powers.

God does forgive; where would we be If Jesus' grace we did not see? Oh give Him thanks and do not stray He is the truth, the life, the way. -L.C.

We are now in the season of Easter - the season of bursting life and freedom from binding death. A jubilant joy and enthusiasm fills us with the message of resurrection.

What is this message that moves us so? It is the same message the apostles taught everywhere they went. It is the gospel of the *kingdom of God* which is bursting into the midst of mankind's dreadful darkness. It is the message of a *risen* Christ.

In reading the gospels and epistles it is remarkable how much they speak of the *kingdom* thought. It seems almost inexhaustible. Perhaps we can in some small way give some thoughts about it.

First, no discussion of the kingdom would be complete without mentioning how one enters. John 3:3-5 quotes Jesus to say without the new birth of water and of the Spirit we can not see or enter this kingdom. When this was proclaimed at hand, people were baptized with water. We cannot mistake this fact. But this new birth of the *Spirit* is what brings us to utter dependency on God.

This makes another point. Paul says that through much tribulation we enter this kingdom. (Acts 14:22) This means suffering which all saints must bear. This means suffering of spirit also. To be part of this kingdom we must give up *all*. (Luke 14: 33) We must become as little children. (Luke 18:17) It is a narrow way. (Matt. 7:14) Only those who do God's will may enter. (Matt. 7:21) Christ's Body, into which we are baptized, is a suffering Body. This comes from the world and *self*. Rom. 6 tells of this death to self. We must rid our hearts of self-esteem, pride, and will. (Rom. 12:3) Col. 2:18 tells us of those "puffed up" who will not submit, as does III John 9. Their judgment is strong. Col. 3 contrasts *self*-life with "hiding" in Christ.

Submission in this kingdom's citizens produces yet another "upside-down" principle--group consciousness we will call it. This was a powerful trait of the early Christians and Anabaptists, also separating early Brethren from Pietists.

This group-mind entails unity. Jesus said a divided kingdom cannot stand. (Matt. 12:25) There must be unity of purpose. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one calling and hope. (Eph. 4, Col. 3:15) The early Christians were often said to be in one accord. We partake one bread and cup. (I Cor. 10:17) Unity, in other words, is an essential.

Unity means there is sharing--sharing discipline (Matt. 18) and I Cor. 5), joys and sorrows (I Cor. 12:26), and material blessings. (I John 3:17, etc.) The apostles' writings are permeated with it. (Rom. 15:5-7; Phil. 1:27. Read them!)

We would like to share a parable the early Christians and Anabaptists told. (Didache 9:4) Communion meetings are common among us at this time, so let us think of this. I will quote from Claus Felbinger (1560).

"...With bread and wine He pointed to the community of His Body. Just as natural bread is made up of many grains ground by millstones, giving all they have to each other and having community among themselves to form one loaf, and just as wine is made from many grapes that have given up their juice in the winepress to be gathered in one drink, so we ourselves have become one in Christ, living and dying with Him to become like Him... Only these [i.e. those ruled by the Holy Spirit], in whose hearts the Word of God dwells--the Word that is life and Spirit (the flesh is of no use)--will eat Christ's body and drink His blood. Whoever thinks he can do it any other way deceives himself."

When we understand these things, then we can realize how true are the words "Jesus lives," and await the Pentecost of His Spirit--in our hearts. It is genuine and it is for real!

-With love to the Church, Michael Harris, Arcanum, Ohio

EROSION

Recently, in this area of California, there has been a great deal of water damage: bridges floating away, roads washed out, houses torn apart, good farm land flooded, and good top soil washed away. What is all of this from? It all is from the effects of mass erosion. If we put a drop of water on our hands, what effect does it have on it? Not much effect. What if we pour a drop in the cement, what effect does it have? Not much, other than a wet spot. But, a continuous drip of water, minute after minute, day after day, year after year, will gradually and eventually wear away the hard cement to the point of ruin. A swift, small, stream on a hilly pasture may possibly ruin the usability of the land. How can this change come about? According to Webster's Dictionary the definition of "erode" is: "to diminish or destroy by degrees." What about spiritual erosion? Are we letting the evil one slowly destroy our spiritual life and effectiveness by degrees? We may think that surely this would not happen to us., but as I Cor. 10:12 says, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Remember that erosion usually is a gradual wearing away. It is not one step, it is gradual, but yet its end is always the same. We must think back over our past. Do we do things now that we would never have done several years ago? Or are we not doing good things that we did several years ago? We may not have mass erosion like some "mainstream churches" of today, but are we slowly slipping from our historical ground? I firmly believe that each and every one of us should examine every area of our lives and see if there are any areas that we are letting erode away. Remember, that Satan is not out to hassle us, he is out to destroy us; and sometimes that destruction is a little at a time.

Is not one of the first signs of spiritual erosion complacency and lack of concern? "It won't happen to me," "But I've been

raised in the church," "I don't think that would happen to us," and "That applies to so-and-so more than me," are warning sign attitudes. Let's approach this matter seriously, not with an attitude of complacency. "Arm-chair" Christianity has no place in our lives. Are we ON FIRE for God? Or have we left our first love? Remember that any less than hot is lukewarm. Do we want to know how to avoid erosion? Grow, grow, grow,-for the Christian life is either upward or downward. Often we see signs that say, "No Parking." In the Christian life is there any place for parking?

Are we letting the world erode away our standards of nonconformity and simplicity? Rom. 12:2 says, "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable. and perfect, will of God." And II Cor. 11:3: "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." Recently I read an early quote from a brethren history book that gave the following testimony: "... We have been instructed by them (the past brethren) also in example. Many aged brethren now living in all parts of the country attest to plain and simple manners of the old brethren who sleep in Jesus. Their bodies were adorned in the established garment - the one that cuts the carnal mind. Their houses contained no unnecessary furniture, no fancy painting of the woodwork, no images of things on earth or in heaven, and no extras inside or outside to gratify the lust of the eye." It makes us very alarmed to think how much many "plain" churches of today have eroded from that ancient standard. Should we seek to satisfy the eye? Do "extra touches" have a place in a Christian's life and home? Should our attitudes be, "It surely won't hurt," or "But so-and-so does it," or should they be "I will do all things for the glory of God"? As I Cor. 10:23

says, "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not." We have been given liberty, We are not under the old law. Gal. 5:13 says it well: "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." Our liberty is not to act like the world from which we have been redeemed, but liberty to serve the Lord. We are not slaves to laws and sacrifices, but have liberty to worship the Lord "in spirit and truth." We are not of this world, so why should our lives reflect the influence of its image? If we are not of it, then why is it so hard to let it go? Is our liberty to serve the Lord with all our heart, or to get away with what we want?

Are we letting the world's standard of living erode away the gospel's standard of living? Matt. 6:32,33 says of worldly goods, "(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these But seek ve first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." As Christians, we do not have need of the treasures of the world, Heb. 11:26 says of Moses, "Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward." Our treasures are "But lay up for (or should be) in heaven. Mat. 6:20: yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:" The world thinks it has need of the newest, biggest, best, and easiest, Is the Christian promised an easy life? Why must we then seek one?

Are we letting the world's fashions subtly alter our simple plainness? Being concerned with what is "in" and "out" has no place for the Christian. The changing fashions of the world are not compatible with the steadfast simplicity taught in the Bible.

I Cor. 7:31: "And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away." Let us be very careful to be consistent in every area of our life with the gospel principles. Would it not please the Father if we spent as much time on our knees as we did in the department store? Our clothes and lives don't need to be changed by fads. We have been freed from such bondage. While we may not be given to mainstream fashions, are we letting the casual influence of the world influence us? Can we be picked out as those from a Bible-believing, plain church in our Sunday clothes as well as our work clothes? Could we be picked out as those from a plain church just by the fabric we choose? Could a glance tell a bystander that we come from a conservative, plain home? Does Rom. 12:2 say, "And be ye not conformed unto this world on Sunday: but on that day be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God..."?

Are we letting the world erode away our standards of Christian music? The world seeks to entertain, but Christ seeks to edify. If there is nothing wrong with the contemporary "Christianized" music of today's era, then why is it so hard for many to give it up? What about our leisure and recreation time? Are we letting the world influence us in that area too? Are our favorite places to go the "fun" places, or the sanctuary of God? We must remember to "redeem the time" as taught in the Scriptures. Think what a blessing and impact it would be if every Christian spent his "free time" to the furtherance of the gospel. God sees us all the time. He sees the smile given to a lonely soul. He sees the song sung for a helpless elderly one. He sees the prayer for a wayward friend. We will not go unrewarded for doing right. But the opposite is also true. God sees all the money wasted in useless entertainment. God sees all the Christians who love the pleasure houses of the world, more than Christ-like ministry. Is there ever a time when it is

acceptable to throw off (erode) our higher standards of modesty, sobriety, and simplicity just to have fun? Is the Christian life fun and games? Yes, there are lasting joys in the Christian life, and bright spots of encouragement, but there is no place for worldly flippancy in our lives. Is it good to waste our time even if it is on "old-fashioned" fun?

-to be continued --William Johnson Modesto, California

COMMUNION MEETING NOTICE

We, the members of the Eastern District of the Old Brethren have appointed April 26 and 27, the Lord willing, for our spring Lovefeast at our meeting house near Wakarusa, Indiana. We extend a hearty welcome to all our members and friends to attend and worship with us.

--Melvin Coning

BIRTHS

STALTER -- A son, Marvin Earl, born February 14 to Ralph and Becky Stalter of Goshen, Indiana.

CABLE -- A son, Jaron Lee, born March 20 to Andrew and Joanna Cable of Wakarusa, Indiana.

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WONDERS FROM GOD

Oh, wonder of wonders! Oh how can it be? God of the Universe - He cares for me. Creator, and Ruler; all powerful is He. He made a provision that I can be free.

Though feeble and faltering is my love to Him; And often I stumble and fall into sin; Yet His love forgives me and calls me again; To stay close to His side, the vict'ry to win.

Oh, wonder of wonders! That this mighty one Knew all that would happen, e'er He first begun, And there He decided, to e'en send His Son, To suffer and die here, for what we have done.

In weakness and failing, we struggle along; But this God understands our slips into wrong. And His love has moved Him, and He'll make us strong; So better we'll serve Him, in deed, word, and song.

Oh, wonder of wonders! A day is ahead, When this mighty Savior will do what He said: Descend from the Heavens and raise up the dead, And judge our decisions; by whom we are led.

Then this feeble being can live up above,
If heeding His teachings, we've stayed in His love;
And better we'll praise Him, in heaven above.
Oh, wonder of wonders! What glorious love!
-James Beery
Nappanee, Indiana

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES: ONE MOST IMPORTANT DEATH

All men die physically, but there's no death of man that has the publicity and honor of the death of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Great men of the ages have passed on with more publicity and honor of men than Jesus had, but they have become unknown by most of the world's populace. This in itself reveals a truth that merits our notice.

Great men of the earth, by the standards of men, have been able to govern and influence kingdoms of men to betterment and blessing, but in time it runs out and something else takes its place. The reason for this is that man is only able to put a bandaid on the problems of society.

The reason the death of Jesus continues to be remembered is because God has a hand in it. All generations are held accountable to its significance. We believe this is why the events of His life, suffering, death, and resurrection have been carefully documented by four of His disciples and have become part of the Holy Scriptures.

There are two things that took place, when Jesus suffered and died, that need to be understood by the intellectual mind to receive the blessing and benefit -- which is eternal life.

First, that He was the only man that ever lived that qualified to atone for the sins of all men -- because of His sinless life. Had He not qualified, there would be no salvation.

The second, is His submission to the suffering and death of the physical man. He would have had the power to refuse to suffer and die, but He willingly submitted Himself.

We, as His followers do not have the power to be exempt from suffering and death. If carnal man would have the power, as Jesus had, they would refuse to suffer and die. Had Jesus not willingly submitted to suffering and death, there would be no resurrection to eternal life. In His trying hour He cried out to His heavenly Father, "Why?" but concluded, "Not My will, but Thine be done," which was the death blow to death, hell, and the grave.

The victory that Jesus revealed to all the world in His suffering and death can now be attained by all that put their faith and trust in Him and willingly suffer and die in the flesh. This battle isn't easy, but Jesus said, "Be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."

-Kenneth Martin

CHILDREN'S PAGE: PUPPIES FOR SALE

A store owner was putting up a sign above his door that read "Puppies for sale." Signs like this have a way of attracting small children. Sure enough, a little boy appeared and asked, "How much will you sell the puppies for?"

The store owner replied, "Anywhere from \$30.00 to \$50.00."

The little boy reached into his pocket and pulled out some change. "I have \$2.37. Can I please look at them?"

The owner smiled and whistled. Lady came running down the aisle of his store, five tiny balls of fur following her. One puppy was limping and behind the others. Immediately the boy asked, "What's wrong with that little dog?"

The owner said he didn't have a hip socket. He would always limp. The boy said, "That is the puppy I want to buy."

The owner said, "You don't want to buy that puppy. If you really want him I will give him to you."

The little boy got quite upset and said, "That little dog is worth as much as the rest. I'll give you \$2.37 now, and 50 cents a month until he is paid for."

The store owner couldn't understand, "But he will never run, jump, and play like the other puppies."

The little boy stooped down and rolled up his pant leg. There was a badly twisted, crippled leg supported by a metal brace. He looked in the owner's eyes and softly said, "I don't run so well myself. The little puppy needs someone who understands."

What would we do without children to show us how to be more understanding to others.

-Revised by Everett Oyler from Dan Clark's Writings.

FOR YOUTH: WHAT'S INSIDE?

"Which dress should I wear today, Mom?" Thirteen year old Sally was getting ready for school.

"All your dresses are suitable," replied her mother. "You may choose for yourself. Just be sure you do your best to be modest and neat. The way you dress helps to show what you are inside. But how you act is even more important."

Good advice from Mom! How do we make the little decisions and choices for each day? Young children choose the things that suit their fancy. They have not yet learned that our conduct shows to others, and that we are responsible to give a good light for our Saviour. But as we grow older, we learn that what we say, how we act, and how we look are all important in our relationship to our friends. Young people like to do things the same, so what you do makes a big difference in what your friends do.

For both young boys and young girls, the guidance of your parents is very important. Even if it sometimes seems that they don't understand, still they are the ones that love you most and know best what you need.

Evidently in the case of Sally, her whole wardrobe was suitable and had been approved by her parents. So the choice of what to wear was not hard. But some choices will not be so easy. Even though your parents have taught you how to act—what to say and what not to say, still it is possible to do wrong. If you use slang words, your friends will be influenced to use them, too. If your attitude is kind and loving, it will help your friends to be that way too. This is especially true with the friends that are a little younger that you. They will tend to imitate your example.

As Sally's mother hinted, you can have suitable clothes, but what you are inside is even more important. You can decide right now that you want to learn more and more to act and be like Jesus would have us be -- for His sake and for the sake of your friends.

How you act shows what you are; What you choose shows what's inside; What you say will travel far; You can never run and hide For your friends who follow you Are watching what you say and do. --L.C.

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"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." I Peter 2:11

COME, O COME, THOU HOLY SPIRIT

Come, O come, thou Holy Spirit, God of all eternity. Be our strength, for we are weakness, And do Thou our leader be, Then shall spirit, life, and peace In our darkened hearts ne'er cease.

Lord, endow us with Thy Spirit And with wisdom from on high, That in all our undertakings We alone on Thee rely; Help us by Thy mighty hand Sin and evil to withstand.

Show us on our way to heaven All that may a hindrance be; Help us, Lord, to keep our pathway Free from all that grieveth Thee, And, whene'er we go astray, Do Thou guide us in the way.

Give us in our understanding Wisdom, counsel, and advice, That we're nothing undertaking But what can Thy will suffice. Great Thy understanding be, And make us from error free.

-from Spiritual Hymns

THE PILGRIM is a religious magazine published in the interests of the members of the Old Brethren Church. Subscription rate: \$5.00 per year, Sample copies sent free on request.

Publishing editor: Leslie Cover

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MOTHER

Mothers come in all sizes: mine was medium with a short waist but long from there on down. Papa was the opposite. They were opposites in other ways, too. Papa was a reader, a poet, and one who didn't worry too much about finances. Mama was practical, frugal, and did worry about finances. Though opposites, they harmonized well because they loved each other. As an elderly man, Papa told me he loved Mama more than he had when they were young, and I think she could have said the same.

They also loved their children. Mama's love was expressed in constant concern for our welfare. She served her children so faithfully. Sometimes we would take her service for granted and even ask her to do things we could do for ourselves. Her standard reply was, "Who was your servant last year?"

Mama was devout in her unique way. She always let Papa take initiative in spiritual things and quietly repeated the Lord's prayer after he prayed at family worship. She supported him and taught us--not complicated doctrines, but practical honesty, kindness to others, and respect for authority.

I would echo my brother's assessment of Mother when he wrote for a school assignment a description of her labors for us and ended it, "Without her I would fare badly!" --L.C.

HOLY SPIRIT GENTLE POWER

Walking in the oat field the other day, I saw a pair of doves fly up from the grain just ahead of me. As they flew they made shy musical chirps, a beautiful picture of gentle goodness. Our young dog sprang after them but stopped when I called her back. A dove is probably as harmless as any animal or bird. I have never seen a dove attack another creature. Instead, we see them feeding on the ground gathering seeds and grain. Some men hunt them, and I suppose it is not any more wrong than hunting any other creature for food. But somehow, I would not want to kill a dove, since God used this bird to symbolize His Holy Spirit.

When Jesus was baptized, John the Baptizer saw the Spirit descend on Him. Matthew, Mark, and John write "like a dove" and Luke records "in a bodily shape like a dove." This was the sign John the Baptist was looking for. His testimony is impressive: "And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God." John saw this likeness of a dove descend from heaven "and it abode upon him."

As we study the effects of this Holy Spirit both in Jesus Christ and later on the Church of Christ, we see demonstrations of His power. But we see also characteristics which we don't usually associate with power. Jesus said, "I am meek and lowly in heart." Paul in Galatians 5 lists the fruit of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

Man has devised powerful machines such as huge tractors, trucks, and cranes. He has been allowed to invent the terribly destructive atomic and hydrogen bombs that wipe out whole cities in one burst of power. But these devices are anything but gentle. Concerned groups complain that tractors rip up the land destroying wildlife habitat, upsetting the beauties of nature. And see the wholesale destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the misery and death of the radiation following. Not gentle, not good, not meek, not temperate, and certainly not peaceful.

The power of God's Holy Spirit exceeds any device of man. He can destroy -- lay waste. But His effects on the hearts of man are not destructive. He builds, rescues, and saves through the blood of our Saviour. And the side effects are not like harmful radiation, but love and joy.

The lesson for us is to be aware of the characteristics of the Holy Spirit. John writes, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." The Spirit of God confesses Jesus Christ and what He taught in the world. When we see or feel a spirit of wrath or retaliation or strife, we can be sure it is not the Holy Spirit. (See the works of the flesh listed also in Galatians 5.)

In Pentecost sermons of the past, Brother Elmer Brovont used to say, "The Holy Spirit is no fighter; He will not force His way into your heart." This does not mean He is weak or passive. Meekness is not weakness.

So we have available to us now a power that cannot be exceeded, one that can change lives, and even move mountains, if necessary. But this power is gentle and good. We are fragile creatures, easily destroyed. God knows how to save. When the Holy Spirit was given at Pentecost nearly 2000 years ago, 3000 souls were added to the church. The disciples lost their fear; it was replaced by love. They went throughout the world with the Gospel of salvation, attended, not by violence, but by deliverance--not with a bloody sword of war, but with the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.

May this same powerful, gentle, peaceful Holy Spirit work in our hearts today to spread joy and faith and love.

Isaac Watts wrote:

Come Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove, With all Thy quickening powers; Kindle a flame of sacred love In these cold hearts of ours. --L.C.

EROSION (Continued)

What about reading material? Do we get pleasure by reading the "christianized" fluff of the world, or edifying books? Do we read for instruction or self-pleasure? The purpose of many such books is not for the edification of the saints; rather the style is borrowed from that of the world. Do we gain wisdom by reading what the past elderly saints in our brotherhood have written? Or are we letting the standard erode away in this area also?

Are we letting the "liberated" attitude of humanity alter our attitude of Church traditions? Church traditions are only wrong if they provide an excuse for the disobedience of God's Word as said in Mark 7:13: "Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things ye do," and Col. 2:8: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." But there is nothing wrong with time-tested traditions of themselves. It was not until the "liberated" attitudes of the last few centuries came on the scene that people questioned them. II Thess. 2:15 also exhorts: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle." Traditions are good if they are in compliance with, and supported by, God's Holy Bible. Let us not be swept away by the world into the falsely promised, selfish freedom. II Peter 2:19 says: "While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for by whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." Is there ever any reason to throw off the Scriptural traditions for the carnal traditions of the world, even in small ways? Are we tempted to follow a "hybrid" Christianity, by

changing some of our "smaller" Biblical traditions for more modern ways?

What about friends? Are our friends good influences on us? Remember that "bad company corrupts good morals." Are our friends distracted from the true meaning of Christian life? If so, then let us beware lest we, too, unknowingly follow their example. I have read that one can tell a person's integrity and sincerity by the friends that they choose. What about us? Are we a good influence to our friends? Or are we, not thinking, influencing them away from the pure simplicity that is in Christ? Let us be very careful not to let competition and contention enter into our relationships. Friends are for encouragement and friendship, so let us not ever attempt to try to make ourselves look better than another. Close friendships are good in their place, but let us be careful to include others into our "circle of friends." When visitors come, do we welcome them and talk to them, or do we go off by ourselves? Do we willingly include others, or do we leave them to find conversation themselves? What things do we like to do with our friends? Do we always only do the "fun" things, or do we do more profitable things too, sometimes? Let's remember that "profitable" things can be enjoyable too; it all depends what our attitudes are about work. Do we always remember that Jesus sees us all the time, and nothing escapes His view?

Are we letting the world erode away the long-standing doctrine of non-resistance? Matt. 5:39 exhorts: "But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." The world says we have to "get ahead" in life, but that is not the gospel principle. God says that we will be rewarded if we are persecuted. The world is geared towards selfishness. We, as Christians, should not exert our selfishness over a just God, and punish as only He has the right to do. God is the only One who

will recompense every man according to his deeds. We should not ever attempt to punish someone for evil done to us or others, but rather bless them. This includes both thought, word, and deed. It is easy to think of non-resistance as only for difficult situations, but what about avoiding a person who is hard to get along with. Is that non-resistance? What about whispering gossip about a hard-to-get-along-with neighbor? We may not physically (like the world), try to get even with someone, but what about our attitudes? Do we have an attitude of blessing to our "enemy"?

Lastly, are we letting the world erode away our standards of attitudes and thinking? Phil. 4:8 says: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Are we being eroded by the world's standards of gossip, backbiting, and evil speaking? Can we picture Christ eagerly passing on the newest "juicy detail" about someone? Don't we think God would be pleased if we spent as much time in praise and exhortation as we do in idle talking? I Pet. 1:15: "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." Do we take every opportunity we have to share our faith, or do we try to hide in the background?

We must read our Bibles. It is our standard of living. Anything less than that, has been eroded away by the evil one. We are commanded to be holy. I Pet. 1:16 says, "Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." Each step we take, each word we say, each thought we think, we must ponder if that is what Jesus would do. Let us carefully examine each area of our lives. We may never know that our thoughtlessness caused another fellow believer to stumble in the way. Luke 17:2 says, "It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of

these little ones." The word "offend" means "to cause another to sin." Let us be careful that we not cause another to sin by what we do. Let us always follow Jesus. He is our Leader. Would we be embarrassed if Jesus took a peek into our clothes closet? Would we blush if He opened our car door? Would we hang our head in shame if He took a survey of our book shelf? Would we worry when He headed towards the fabric closet? Would we be in a fluster if He asked for our music tapes? What about price tags? Would we apologize if He knew the costs of our possessions? What would we say if He asked us, "What do you do with your money that I have given you?" What would we say if He asked us, "What do you do with all your time?" When we think of the great sacrifice Christ has made it puts it all in perspective.

May each one of us draw ever closer to Him, and His likeness, away from the world's erosion, even in small ways; for erosion is a slow destruction. And may the words of Christ be, when we come at last to heaven: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." (Matt. 25:23) --William Johnson

Modesto, California

THE VALUABLE PAPER

It was not unusual to return home after a morning downtown to find the phone ringing. So that bright January afternoon I answered it expecting to hear the voice of a friend. There was a slight hesitancy, then, "This is Western Union. I have a telegram for you." The news was the kind one never wants to hear. My mother had been killed in an auto accident. My father lived but was in critical condition.

Through the nightmare of preparation to go home, many thoughts plagued me. Of course, I knew that sometime the

parting must come, but I had expected to be able to return in some way the care that I had had. Now there was no time to say or do anything. I wondered and wondered and found no answer. Had I never really expressed to Mother the love I had for her? I could think of nothing I had ever said or done.

A firm believer in preparedness, Mother had left instructions as to what should be done after her death. Some instructions she had written out, others were verbal.

"I have a box of valuable papers I want you to look through," she had said, describing the box and its location.

I don't know what I expected to find, but not what I did. The valuable papers were treasured letters from her children, her father's ordination papers, some pictures, and a yellowed mimeographed sheet dated 1941 on which was written, "To My Mother." In that year my husband and I were coeditors of our Sunday school class newssheet. I had written the editorial and mailed it to her. Valuable? Can peace of mind be bought at any price? That paper restored mine and also gave me the conviction that love is much stronger than death. The paper?

TO MY MOTHER

I do not apologize for writing about my own mother. I know her better than other mothers and she means more to me than any others.

There are any number of things for which I wish to thank my mother. First of all, for giving me life. There have been times when I thought life was not such a privilege, when I even went so far as to think, "I didn't ask to be born, why is such and such and so and so?" Those times were few. For the most part life has been very interesting, if at times very puzzling and occasionally very difficult.

I am thankful my mother did not insult my intelligence by lying to me, even about small things. There were, of course, times when I was positive she was lying. For instance, after

sending me out for a stick, giving a severe lecture, and then saying, "This hurts me worse than it does you." I know now that she was truthful. Nothing is more unpleasant than trying to correct a child you love. Many parents today neglect this painful duty and live to regret the results. There were many things my mother avoided telling me (and I her) but if questions were answered they were answered truthfully.

There was no question in our mind unanswered about Santa Claus, and I was never regaled with tales about the stork. I am thankful my mother made it easy for me to be honest. First, by example, and second by not placing me in positions that made lying expedient. None of us like to be scared either into telling the truth or lying.

We are told that our heavenly Father knows what things we have need of. And so did Mother. I do not remember teasing or begging for things. We were not permitted to do this and it wasn't necessary. Mother seemed to plan ahead for my material, spiritual, and educational needs. I realized when I grew older that many things hadn't just happened. They were planned for my welfare.

There were times when I thought I was somewhat abused. I remember telling Mother in my vinegary way that other girls I knew didn't have to wipe dishes for *their* mother. Now that I have an inkling of the many tasks about a home, I wonder why she didn't make me work twice as hard.

Greatest of all I am thankful for the security I have felt, being assured that I was loved before I was born and since, though I am sure the latter must have been very difficult at times. Any child born and reared without such security is indeed poor.

I am grateful I have a mother.

--by Elizabeth Kent in Gospel Herald, May, 1972

(This article was sent in 1972 by my wife to her mother and was found among her papers after she died. --L.C.)

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES: HOLY SPIRIT POWER

As Jesus was nearing the end of His physical life on earth, there was sadness and disappointment in the hearts of those that loved Him. Jesus, being aware of this, said to them to not let their hearts be troubled, and that this separation would only be temporary. In the meantime He would keep in touch with them, through another Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost whom the Father will send in His name, and that He would teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance. His physical departure was necessary before this could happen. (John 16:7)

Not many days after Jesus ascended to heaven, His disciples were with one accord in one place, and this that Jesus had promised was fulfilled with such significance that it startled the world. To those that knew what it was, it displayed a power that puzzled the world. The proof of the Holy Ghost's being in the world is now sealed and proven in all those that are bearing the image of Christ.

After the dramatic outpouring of the Holy Ghost, this became part of the Gospel and its teaching. It is important to know and understand that the working of the Holy Ghost is a vital doctrine of salvation and that there is no salvation outside of Holy Ghost power because it is the essence of all that Christ is. Jesus said that without it we are none of His. (Rom. 8:9)

To receive the Holy Ghost requires the knowledge of who He is. (Acts 19:2) In our intellectual mind we need to know Him as a person. He has feeling and senses. He can be grieved. He can speak. He wants our companionship without any barriers.

The Holy Ghost descended on Jesus in the form of a dove; and tongues of fire and a mighty wind were an introduction of His presence and power in the world. Man is now held

accountable to His presence and accessibility. His manner in vindicating Himself to the world was an exception, not the rule.

In man's desire to dramatize the powers displayed at that notable Pentecost, he would like to claim and impress our fellowmen with the same visible signs and say that it takes a dramatic sensation to experience the presence of the Holy Ghost.

To receive the gift of the Holy Spirit is a gift from God's hand. To qualify for this gift requires obedience to Him. "And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him." (Acts 5:32)

We believe the Scriptural channel for us to receive the Holy Ghost is by obedience in repentance and baptism and the laying on of hands. This needs to be more than just obeying the Biblical text; it is in honor to Christ and bearing His image, which is the only valid proof of being filled with the Holy Ghost.

--Kenneth Martin

ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

The Annual Meeting of the Old Brethren Church will be held, the Lord willing, on May 16, 17, and 18, at the Salida, California meeting house. Friday will be council day; on Saturday and Sunday (Pentecost), there will be public preaching; and on Saturday evening, the Communion service. A hearty invitation and welcome is extended to all our members and friends to attend.

--Joseph L. Cover

BAPTISMS

Rachel Flora, April 6 Eastern Congregation
Christopher Taylor, April 20 California Congregation
May they be faithful and grow in grace, as God works in their lives.

FOR YOUTH

THE CHRISTIAN MIND: GLEANINGS FROM A SERMON BY BROTHER LLOYD WAGNER

Text: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Phil. 4:8

The deepest reverence of the mind pay, O my soul, to God. Do we want to see God? Then we must be pure in heart.

Our minds are an incredible creation. It is intriguing for man to try to understand its workings. It gives us the ability to smell, hear, see, and remember. The animals do not have the power to reason. The mind is the seat of the emotions and will. Pro. 23:7: For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he. The heart here is the same as the mind. Our hearts are what we really are. Only God and I know my heart. He ponders what we are thinking.

Just what do we think about during the day? Our minds are never totally at rest. We dream, and even in sleep the brain still is controlling the body. We carry on a conversation in our heads all of our waking hours. The Word says to "Love the Lord with all your mind." Is it possible? Yes, by God working in our lives and we applying ourselves diligently. Jer. 31:31-34 says God will write it in our inward parts. How?

- 1. He has given us an Example of love, humility, and sacrifice in Jesus. We know that this is what He wants. Phil. 2:1-8. There's not one area in our lives that we cannot have Jesus' Example.
- 2. He changes the old man to a new man. (II Cor. 5:17) All things (the mind) are become new.

- 3. He gives us His Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth. John 14:26. Do we thank Him enough for this wonderful Gift and Promise?
- 4. Since Satan does not give up on the Christian, the Christian is now equipped with weapons to fight him. He attacks the mind. II Cor. 10:3-5. Our weapons bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. Do we think this is impossible? God had control over the stronghold of Jericho and pulled it down.

The result of a God-centered mind and trust in God is peace. Carnal thinking does not bring peace. To be carnally minded is death. Peace is to have no enmity with God.

What is our part? Phil. 4:6 says, "Be careful for nothing. That means "Don't worry." Paul was in prison when he wrote this, but do we hear him complaining? No! Instead he says to "Rejoice, Give thanks...and the peace of God ... shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Phil. 4:8. Truth and honesty go together. Jesus is the Truth; think on Him. He was full of grace and truth. Consistency in one's profession is a truthful life.

Jesus was also just and pure. The Roman government was most unjust and impure. Did He get involved in it? No! He didn't tell His followers to either.

Whatsoever things are lovely,...of good report. The newspapers are not good reports.

If there be any virtue...any praise. Look for the good and valuable things, such as God's Word and encouragement of the church.

Phil. 4:9: "...Do: and the God of peace shall be with you."
--Sarah Cover

Know God; Know Peace No God; No Peace Bumper sticker observed by Charles and Leona Miller

CHILDREN'S PAGE:

A MOTHER'S LOVE

Our little son came up to his mother one evening while she was fixing supper. He handed her a piece of paper he had been writing on. His mother dried her hands, and read the note. This is what it said:

For cutting grass	5.00
For cleaning up room last week	1.00
For going to the store for you	.50
Baby-sitting brother while you shopped	.25
Taking out the garbage	1.00
For getting a good report card	5.00
For cleaning and raking the yard	2.00
Total owed	\$14.75

Mother looked ar her son, memories flashing through her mind. She picked up the pen, turned over the paper and wrote:

For nine months carrying you before you were borne	\$00
For all the nights I've sat up doctoring you	\$00
For all the tears and trying times you've caused me	\$00
For all the nights that were filled with dread that	I knew
were ahead	\$00

For the food, toys, clothes, and even wiping your nose \$00 When you add it all up, the full cost of love is No charge.

When our son finished reading the note, there were big tears in his eyes. He said, "Mom, I sure do love you." He then wrote on the bottom, "Paid in full." --Author, M. Adams

Jesus loves us more than our mother. Still He had said, "Paid in full." Even though there is no charge for a mother's love, let's give her the best gift: obeying her.

HERE AM I

Speak, oh Lord, Thy servant heareth; down on bended knee. Anxious to discover, how more like You to be. Show me how I need to change. Instruct me in Your will. Make me all that I should be, while I am soft and still. Give me strength to walk with You the way that You desire; Though painful be the road ahead, I'll give what You require. Speak, oh Lord, Thy servant waiteth; anxious to behold, The me that You'll be making as Your perfect plan unfolds.

-- Gail Storkel

BIRTHS

BEERY -- A son, Allen James, born April 14, to Jonathan and Angi Beery of Goshen, Indiana.

COVER -- A son, Edward Daniel, born April 14, to Peter and Denita Cover of Tuolumne, California.

MARTIN -- A daughter, Daria Joy, born April 25, to Jonathan and Lisa Martin of Goshen, Indiana.

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THE PILGRIM

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"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." I Peter 2:11

THE WILL OF GOD

Laid on Thine altar, O my Lord Divine, Accept my gift this day, for Jesus sake; I have no jewels to adorn Thy shrine, Nor any world-famed sacrifice to make; But here I bring within my trembling hands This will of mine, a thing that seemeth small, Yet Thou alone, O Lord, canst understand How, when I yield Thee this, I yield Thee all.

Hidden therein, Thy searching gaze can see
Struggles of passion, visions of delight,
All that I have, or fain would be.
Deep loves, fond hopes, and longings infinite:
It hath been wet with tears, and dimmed with sighs,
Clenched in my grasp, till beauty hath it none:
Now from Thy footstool, where it vanquished lies,
The prayer ascendeth, "May Thy will be done."

Take it, O Father, ere my courage fail,
And merge it so in Thine own, that e'en
If in some desperate hour my cries prevail,
And Thou give back my gift, it may have been
So changed, so purified, so far have grown,
So one with Thee, so filled with love Divine,
I may not know or feel it as my own,
But gaining back my will, may find it Thine.

-- Author Unknown

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HEARD AFAR OFF

The time was 535 B.C. The place was Jerusalem. The Lord had "stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia" to allow the Jews to return to their homeland the year before to rebuild their temple. He had made this proclamation and put it in writing: "Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up." Now the people were preparing to build that temple. They laid the foundation and held a celebration of thanksgiving. Trumpets sounded, cymbals clanged, and the singers sang praise and thanks to God.

There was great rejoicing at this event because God had lifted His punishing hand, and they were again to have their own land and their house of worship. All were happy... except the "ancient men" that had, in their youth, seen the magnificent temple of Solomon that the Babylonians had destroyed. These men were disappointed as they saw the smaller foundation and realized that with their meager resources they could never match the splendor of that former building. They lifted up their voices in loud lamentation. The record says they "...wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy: So that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people: for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off." (Ezra 3:10-13) What a strange event as these emotional people loudly expressed their sorrow and joy!

This may seem odd to us, but is it not our own experience to have and express mixed feelings? Haven't you ever felt great joy over some event of your life, but also realized there was a sad side also?

One example might be the loss of a loved one. In our sorrow there is a rejoicing for the victory and release of one prisoned in an aging body. The assurance that our dear one is with the Lord should mingle rejoicing with our sorrow. And this can be a testimony to the world that is "heard afar off."

Recently as I read the chapter on the suffering of the Savior, the thoughts came to me of sadness that this kind of treatment should be done against the Savior who loved us and came not to condemn the world but to save the world. He deserved a crown and throne but received thorns and a cross. But in the midst of this sadness, we realize that this was the way (the only way) that God ordained for us to be saved and have eternal joy. If only this mingled sorrow and joy can sound out from our lives and be "heard afar off" it will make an impression on the unconverted around us. Sorrow for what our deliverance required, but rejoicing for what it accomplished!

Another example of our mixed feelings could be in our personal efforts to serve in the world. We may start out with high hopes and great plans. But we soon realize that our feeble efforts are so useless. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it..." Our disappointments seem mountainous, but along with disappointment and sometimes frustration, may we have the peace and rest in the knowledge that God is able. In Him and only in Him can we find victory and answers.

All this mingling of emotions, of sadness and joy, of mourning and rejoicing, of disappointment and peace is perfected in submission to God's will. How good it is that Someone knows better than we do. And this Someone is God and He has control. How tragic it would be if God would yield to our cries and give us our will instead of His! May we just rest in His

perfect will for us and accept the fact that life is a mixture of the bitter and the sweet.

Pro. 12:21 says, "There shall no evil happen to the just..." Jesus assured His followers, "But there shall not an hair of your head perish." These and many other Scriptures tell us that God will bring us through any trial if we trust in Him. Uncle Christie Cover said once in his preaching: "Well, you have to live, don't you?" (This was an excuse for accommodating ourselves to and compromising with the world.) His own answer was, "No, you don't have to live!" The real values are eternal life in Christ, and fulfilling His will, whether it be joy or sorrow, life or death, rejoicing or mourning. May it be "heard afar off" as we live for Christ. --L.C.

THE MINGLED CRY

A bitter cry, a loud lament Is from our hearts to heaven sent, When we behold our feeble fight Against the black of Satan's night.

But, oh, the joyful cry of bliss When we behold the pain we miss Because our Lord was crucified, Because for me He bled and died.

A mingled sound is heard around; Part of us mourns, but joys abound. We praise the Lamb who died to win But mourn the pain caused by our sin.

This mingled cry is heard far off.
The saints rejoice though sinners scoff.
Keep on, dear brethren, sisters too;
A crown awaits for me, for you. --L.C.

PRUDENCE OR PUNISHMENT

Once on a hike in the mountains, I walked among the rocks along a large stream. The day was warm, and many people were wading and swimming in the water.

As I continued the stream grew swifter, and I saw a sign that said, "Danger! falls ahead!" Yet beyond the sign people were still wading and swimming in the water.

As I continued, the water became much swifter. Then I saw signs that said, "If you enter the water, YOU WILL DIE!" These signs were very impressive to me.

The signs didn't say, "You MIGHT die." They said, "You WILL die." The water was so swift, and the distance to the falls so short, that the outcome was certain.

Even here by the top of the falls, people were sitting on the rocks dangling their feet in the water. One mistake or slip and they would perish. I marvel that they valued their life so little that they would carelessly risk it in this manner.

In the spiritual realm, there is a parallel to this. Many people willfully indulge in sin, though they know it is dangerous and wrong to do so.

God's Word repeatedly warns us to flee sin before we are carried away in its swift currents. God tells us, "If we continue in sin we WILL die." The danger is real! The destruction is ahead if we continue in sin. We never know when we may cross the point of no return. We should flee sin today. There may not be another warning.

For those of us who have left the currents of sin for the safety God has offered: are we ever like the people dangling their feet in the water above the falls? Do we refuse to give up some of our willful ways?

We cannot safely toy with the devil any more than those people could safely dangle their feet in the water. He is watching for any opportunity to hurl us to endless destruction.

May we all heed the advice of Solomon: "The prudent man forseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished."

I think I hear the falls roaring ahead. Flee while there is time! --James Beery

Nappanee, Indiana

GRACIOUS INVITATION

Have you received an invitation lately? Perhaps it was as simple as an invitation to join a family for a meal and fellowship after the church service. Or it may be that special event such as a birthday or anniversary calls for the mailing of individual invitations. Usually a wedding is preceded by carefully chosen invitations and announcements.

However, please consider the profound implications of the invitation we read about in the Apostle John's gospel account. "...Mary...the Master is come, and calleth for thee." (John 11:28)

What an incomparable invitation is found in these words! Can we imagine that the Creator, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords had come to request the presence and fellowship of one particular person: Mary.

The scene we find in this chapter of John's Gospel is, unfortunately, a familiar one to many. Death had come as an unwelcome visitor knocking on the door and taking with it a loved one. In that long ago time, just as in our day, Death calls all too often, leaving behind him the heartache of a loved one no longer present with us.

It would have been a confusing sight which met Jesus. Paid mourners noisily wailed out laments which the family keenly felt

inside. The Gospel tells us that "many of the Jews" were there offering their condolences as best they could. Others were there to blame Lazarus' friend Jesus for His delay in coming: "Couldn't Jesus have done something to help Lazarus if He'd been here on time?"

Mary and Martha surely thought their loving and warm home would never be the same again. The blessed times of hospitality and fellowship shared with their beloved brother were now just a memory.

In the midst of this discord the words quoted above were shared from Martha to her dear sister Mary. No doubt after Martha's conversation with Jesus, her faith had been greatly encouraged. "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, thought he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. And when she had so said, she went her way..." (John 11:25-28a)

Then Martha went to Mary and shared the invitation quoted above. Mary was used to being close to Jesus. Before, it had been Mary who was the one praised for sitting at Jesus' feet, soaking in all she could of Jesus' precious words. This time, however, Martha seems the strong one, immediately rising and going to the Master. Mary merely stayed in the house.

Nevertheless, the Lord didn't leave Mary alone in her sorrow. We are not told what deep emotions Mary was suffering at that moment, we are merely told of the sweet invitation offered to her, "Mary, the Master is come, and calleth for thee."

Matthew Henry writes, "When Christ our Master comes, He calls for us. He comes in His Word and ordinances, and calls us to them, calls us by them. Calls us to Himself. Those who, in a day of peace, set themselves at Christ's feet to be taught by

Him, may with comfort in a day of trouble, cast themselves at His feet, to find favor with Him."

Is this same invitation not offered to us today? We needn't wait for a day of sadness or sorrow to hear the Master calling our name, although we certainly should quickly come running to Him in our sorrows and cares as Martha does in this chapter. But our high calling and privilege is to commune with the Savior daily, sitting at His feet as Mary had done previously.

The question we each need to consider is this: Is this communion a daily habit with me? Remember friend, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee."

--Ken Johnson Modesto, California

THE SOUTH WIND IS BLOWING

Spring is here! Summer is on its way! The south wind blows warm air across the land, causing spring fever, a sense of excitement and a serene atmosphere.

Gardeners and farmers look to the soil; others look to sports; some to the screen; some to the sky.

Shamefully, skin is revealed with shorts and shirtless attire. Soon the sands of the seashore and lakeside will be trodden by sun-seeking people.

Soon the insects and snakes will make their presence known. Satan will sidetrack people in his subtle ways of softness, silliness, and sensuality.

Many years ago Satan began his slandering ways as a serpent. Eve was impressed with the sight of that fruit as the serpent Satan skillfully sold her into sin. How shameful she was after the juicy sweetness had been swallowed!

So beware all you saints of the Lord; this season is swarming with ssssssss!

Jesus said, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise (cautious, wary, cunning) as serpents, and harmless as doves." (Matt.10:16) What an unmistakable message of non-resistance, of turning the other cheek, of meekness! The thought of a serpent having good qualities is repelling, but they do have some good qualities.

Christ has not set His people aside from sin, but has placed them in the midst of evil. "I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth." (Rev. 2:13) This was written to the Church in Pergamos, now Turkey.

The Apostle Paul was buffeted by Satan (II Cor. 12:7); was hindered by Satan. (I Thess. 2:18) However, he was under the power of God as he testified before King Agrippa that God has the power to open eyes, bring us out of darkness into His light, out of the power of Satan into the power of God. (Acts 26:18)

The problem is, Satan is so subtle, slick, even silent in his various workings. It takes an alert Christian to recognize him. It takes a Christian with God's perspectives foremost in his mind. It takes a Christian with God's vision walking in the steps of the Saviour. It takes a Christian who is not ignorant of his devices (enticements, intentions). (II Cor. 2:11)

In Acts 27:13 we find Paul on a ship sailing to Italy. "When the south wind blew softly..." taking this to mean fair weather, they set sail, only to be met by a storm that threw them off course and damaged the ship.

In Acts 28:13 we find them again sailing by the south wind, but this time it took them to brethren. With brethren Paul found refreshment and courage.

In Daniel 11 we find Kings of the north and south at battle, but the King of the north is greater and overcomes the King of the south. This brings great trouble, worse than ever before, to

the "children of thy people." But he says at that time we shall be delivered, if our names are written in the book. (Dan. 12:1)

As we see wickedness abounding and the coming of the Lord nearer; let us be sober and salient in the secular world around us; steadfast in the faith and work; suffering together for His sake; in simplicity; in sincerity; in His strength; speaking the Truth in love; Speaking to the saints in psalms and spiritual songs; submitting to one another; being servants to one another; grasping the sword of the Spirit; praying always with supplication in the Spirit for all saints; standing fast in one spirit; striving together for the faith of the Gospel; obtaining salvation; abiding in the sacrifice and service of our faith; saluting every saint in Christ Jesus.

"For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf; but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple (innocent) concerning evil." Now here is the promise to the faithful: "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." What a blessed promise if we do our part! "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen." (Rom. 16:19,20)

"Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." (Rev. 19:9) --Ron Cable, Goshen, Indiana

LABORERS CHOSEN

On the afternoon of May 16, 1997, during our Annual Meeting, the California congregation assembled to elect more Christian laborers. Chosen for the ministry was Benjamin Cover with his wife Jolene. Elected to the office of deacon was Peter Cover with his wife Denita. At the same time Lloyd Wagner was ordained to the eldership with his wife Beth. May they each be faithful in their various duties in the church of Jesus Christ.

-- Joseph L. Cover

IF WE ONLY UNDERSTOOD

Could we but draw the curtains back That surround each other's lives, See the naked heart and spirit, Know what spur the action gives;

Often we would find it better, Purer than we judge we should; We should love each other better If we only understood.

Could we judge all deeds by motives, See the good and bad within, Often we should love the sinner All the while we loathe the sin;

Could we know the powers working To overthrow integrity, We should love each other's errors With more patient charity.

If we knew the cares and trials, Knew the efforts all in vain, And the bitter disappointment, Understood the loss and gain--

Would the grim eternal roughness Seem--I wonder--just the same? Should we help where now we hinder, Should we pity where now we blame.

Ah, we judge each other harshly, Knowing not life's hidden force; Knowing not the fount of action Is less turbid at its source--

Seeing not amid the evil All the golden grain of good; And we would love each other better If we only understood.

-Author unknown. Selected by Betty Beery

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES: GOD'S GRACE

God's response to fallen man has varied--from His wrath to love and forgiveness. This is how He revealed Himself to man under the law. His response to man was determined by how man responded to Him.

Even under and before the law man was able to find grace in the sight of God--for had Noah not found grace in God's sight, there would be no living man or beast on earth. (Gen. 6:7,8)

Grace, shown to man under or before the law, wasn't necessarily salvation, but a blessing, preservation, and lengthening of the physical life.

There were those that had salvation in those days and somehow were able to relate to the grace that came through Christ, because it is only by this grace that man can be saved.

Grace, defined, is always a favor and blessing received from someone that has the power to give or refrain. Under the old covenant man had to seek God's grace; under the new, God's grace seeks man.

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." (Tit.2:11)

Jesus, being all that God is, has revealed His grace to man. He being the physical evidence of God's grace, doing for man what man was unable to do for himself, has now called us to this knowledge: there is no salvation outside of this. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph.2:8,9)

To prove God's grace is to acknowledge its evidence; this calls us to action. The apostle Paul says, "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all:

yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." (I Cor. 15:10)

"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you: that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." (II Cor. 9:8)

The proof of the grace of God in man is just as visible as the life of Christ, as He revealed it to man.

There is no mystical power in the grace of God that will save us. To say we have the grace of God and not prove it in every thing we have and are, would be evidence that we have not received its benefits, and the grace of God bestowed on us would be in vain.

The grace of God has met man where he is. Man's response to this determines his eternal destiny.

-- Kenneth Martin

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When Christ offered himself to God for us. He not only procured our pardon, but secured our eternal inheritance likewise.

> -- John M. Strickler Departed this life May 18, 1997

CHILDREN'S PAGE: LOOK FOR SOMETHING GOOD

Read Luke 6:37,38.

When Wayne moved into the neighborhood many of the boys came around to welcome him. This made the little boy feel good, because a fellow can get pretty lonesome before he makes friends. But soon Wayne began to notice something. Whenever he was alone with one of his new friends, this boy would warn him against the other boys.

Wayne was determined to like everyone when he moved into the neighborhood, for he liked everyone in the place he had just moved away from. But it wasn't very long before he looked upon each boy with suspicion because someone had told him something not very nice about every boy in the neighborhood. Then Wayne began to look at every one of his playmates through his own eyes instead of believing what the other boy said about them, and so he got along very well with them.

The new boy liked to think that everyone had some good in him. He had learned by moving about that he could find in his friends just what he looked for. If he looked for selfishness in a boy, he could find it; for he admitted he had some selfish traits himself. If he looked for signs of generosity he found them, too, for he himself tried to be generous when he could.

Yes, we find in people what we look for. If we are searching for something bad we shall find, and it will make us very unhappy. Look for the good in people and enjoy their friendship.

-- 100 Devotions for Boys and Girls selected from Exchange Messenger

FOR YOUTH: WORDS OF THE PSALMS

How many of the following blanks can you fill by memory? The references are included for you to check on your answers.

1) For the Lord knoweth the way of the; but the way
of the ungodly shall perish. 1:6
2) What is man, that thou art of him? and the son of
man, that thou visitest him? 8:4
3) Keep me as theof the eye; hide me under the
shadow of thy wings. 17:8
4) Let the words of my mouth, and theof my heart,
be acceptable in thy sight. 19:14
5) The earth is the Lord's, and thethereof; the world,
and they that dwell therein.
6) I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shallbe
in my mouth. 34:1
7) The steps of a good man areby the Lord: and he
delighteth in his way. 37:23
8) Be still, and that I am God. 46:10
9) Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right
within me. 51:10
10) Cast thyupon the Lord; and he shall sustain thee.
55:22
11) So teach us toour days, that we may apply our
hearts unto wisdom. 90:12
12) For he shall give hischarge over thee, to keep
thee in all thy ways. 91:11
13) For the Lord is good; his mercy is 100:5
14) Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness,
and for his works to the children of men. 107:8
15) The fear of the Lord is the beginning of 111:10
16) It is good for me that I have been; that I might
learn thy statutes. 119:71

17) Greathave they which love thy law: and nothing
shall offend them. 119:165
18) He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth
thee will not 121:3
19) Except the Lord build the house, theyin vain that
build it. 127:1
20) Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to
dwell together in
21) By the rivers of , there we sat down, yea, we
wept when we remembered Zion. 137:1
22) Such knowledge is too wonderful for me: it is high, I
cannot unto it. 139: 6
23) Happy is that , whose God is the Lord. 144:15
24) Great is the Lord, and greatly to be 145:3
25) Let every thing that hath praise the Lord. 150:6
Selected

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"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." I Peter 2:11

ARE ALL THE CHILDREN IN?

Are all the children in? The night is falling,
And storm clouds gather in the threatening west;
The lowing cattle seek a friendly shelter,
The bird glides to her nest.
The thunder crashes: wilder grows the tempest,
And darkness settles o'er the fearful din;
Come, shut the door and gather round the hearthstone.
Are all the children in?

Are all the children in? The night is falling, When gilded sin doth walk about the streets. Oh, "At the last it biteth like a serpent"! Poisoned are the stolen sweets. O Mothers, guard the feet of inexperience, Too prone to wander in the paths of sin! Oh, shut the door of love against temptation! Are all the children in?

Are all the children in? The night is falling. The night of death is hastening on apace: The Lord is calling, "Enter thou thy chamber And tarry there a space."

And when He comes, the King in all His glory, Who died the shameful death our hearts to win, Will shut the gates of heaven about us With all the children in!

--Elizabeth Rosser Selected THE PILGRIM is a religious magazine published in the interests of the members of the Old Brethren Church. Subscription rate: \$5.00 per year. Sample copies sent free on request.

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THE PUZZLE

The destiny of mankind, individual and collective, and the fulfillment of the prophecies can be compared to a puzzle being put together piece by piece. The nations, the church, and people, all of us, are pieces that make up the pattern God has planned. The word "puzzle" is not quite right because the pattern is not "puzzling" to God, but known and determined in detail. Hebrews 4:13: "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

As of midnight June 30, 1997, Hong Kong is again part of China after 156 years of British colonial rule. How this fits into God's overall plan, we do not know. But the individual lives of those people will undoubtedly be affected. To us it seems to be a return to a less desirable form of government because we are accustomed to freedom and individual rights. Our concern is for the Christians of Hong Kong. Christians have lived and testified for God under many forms of government. Even severe persecution under the worst kind of rulers has not meant death to the church of Jesus Christ, but rather purifying and even increase. And so, though we may be sad as we pray for God's people under stress in Hong Kong, we know God still rules faithfully, and He will care for His own.

Our newspapers report that Hong Kong will continue to have freedom and "autonomy" and that the Chinese government hopes this freedom will be an example that might induce Taiwan also to rejoin their mother country. Time will tell, and meanwhile we can pray for the Christian testimony in these places.

Perhaps a greater concern for us should be how we fit into God's plans. Are we pieces in God's "puzzle"? Do we match the pieces next to us? Or are we misfits? One who puts a puzzle together must set aside those pieces that do not fit exactly. I remember as a child trying to force the pieces together, but unless they are right, they will not contribute to the finished picture.

Each one of God's children has a place. In a puzzle, there are parts more colorful or detailed that are easy to find and match up. But the less noticeable, the sky, the solid colors, (though just as important to the picture) are usually found last. This could compare to some of us ordinary Christians who have a place just as important but less spectacular and perhaps less desired. God needs ordinary, day by day, pluggers--those willing to serve without notice, but faithfully and consistently.

To be in the place for which we are fitted should be our desire. Uncle Isaac Baker, visiting in California and unaccustomed to our exact practices, said just before Communion, "I just want to find my place and be in it." To me that is a good resolve for life and service in the Church.

May the church of Jesus Christ be like a puzzle with interlocking pieces that stay fastened together to make a picture for God's glory.

GOD'S PLAN: OUR PLACE

There is a place--God knows it well--For each dear child of God to dwell; A special place each one can find To be to others good and kind.

This place is special for the man Who finds and fills it as he can. He fits his neighbors, loves them all, Nor makes them fail nor sin nor fall. To find that place God has for us And by His grace to fill it well--May this our power and skill employ. To find at last our highest joy.

Someday God's plan will be fulfilled; Our final good, what He has willed. Someday we'll reach the heavenly shore. Where questions, puzzles are no more.

--L.C.

BIRTHS

BEERY -- A daughter, Christina Hope, born May 21, to Stephen and Kimberly Beery of Nappanee, Indiana.

WAGNER -- A daughter, Amanda Jean, born June 4, to Daniel and Donna Wagner of Dallas Center, Iowa.

BAPTISMS

Eugene and Bogdona Dutkevich were baptized on June 15, in the Eastern Congregation. May they be faithful and grow in grace, as God works in their lives. Their address is:

> 60412 C.R. 19 Goshen, Indiana 46526 (219) 534-8158

If we have a cold heart toward a friend or brother why should we wonder if we have no fervor toward God.

--Selected

HAVE YOU DIED YET?

What a strange question! Your ability to read the question is proof that, indeed, you are not dead. Most people rejoice that they are still alive. At least, they imagine themselves to be living. However, the Word describes two types of dead people, and all accountable people fall into one of these two categories.

A person may be dead in trespasses and sins. (Eph. 2:1) What an unpleasant corpse to view, even though he may resemble "Lucifer, son of the morning..." "full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty"! (Isa. 14:12, Ezek. 28:12) The most perfect life which disbelieves God when He says, "Ye must be born again" (John 3:7) will not see life. What folly, what hazard to tell the Judge on that great day that I was so exceptionally good that I didn't need to be reborn, or, for that matter, to tell Him that even He couldn't save a sinner such as I!

You are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. (Col.3:3) The cause of death was determined to be a fall upon a stone (Luke 20:18) by one who chose to be crucified. (Gal. 2:20) Death came by choice, not accident; for the odds are impossibly high that you would accidently "humble yourself under the mighty hand of God," (I Pet. 5:6) which is prerequisite to this death. Honor follows humility, (Prov. 15:33) so you may boldly ask, seek, and knock that God's good things may become available to you. (Matt. 7:7) These privileges belong to those who are dead to self. The body of this living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1) is a beautiful sight. How desirable is this death which leads to life!

Having died with Christ, I am no longer my own, even as He left the splendor of heaven to accomplish the will of another. As I consider the station of one for whom an incredible ransom has been paid, I am persuaded that "ye are not your own... therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit,

which are God's. (I Cor. 6:19,20)Surely the ransomed were formerly doomed to death in trespasses and sins. Surely the funeral of the old man is a joy to attend, as one who was dead in sin becomes dead to sin and walks in newness of life. (Rom. 6:11) Songs of praise are appropriate at this funeral, such as "Oh, how happy are they who their Saviour obey, Who has died me from sin to redeem."

Must a person become dead in sin before he can become dead to sin and alive unto God? This need never happen. Jesus said about children, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 19:14) As children grow in years and understanding, the time comes when they realize that they must decide what they will do with Jesus. At this point they die, one way or another. If they choose to obey Him, they enter the life that's hid with Christ in God, never becoming dead in sin. Death in sin is the result of a choice to disobey God, which may take the form of outright rebellion or of choosing not to choose. Ignoring the need to choose may be due to ignorance that every person has inherited the sin nature. To claim that I never inherited the sin nature exposes in me the hated sin of pride. (Prov. 6:16) The only other reason not to choose to obey God is to believe that He lied about hell being one possible destiny for man.

Does the choice to obey God mean we can never become dead in sin? Even a man after God's own heart can fail. We wonder why it required a direct confrontation by Nathan before David repented of such an obvious sin against Uriah and Bathsheba. Since a Christian can fail of the grace of God, how carefully we should walk, "looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb. 12:2)

The battle is real; our Help is supremely powerful; the victory is sure to the crucified with Christ. The faithful can

rejoice with the psalmist, "God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me." (Ps. 49:15)

Spirit so holy, Spirit of love, Spirit so gentle, sent from above; Priceless possession, purchase of blood, Good beyond measure, gift of our Lord.

Spirit of wisdom, Spirit of light, Spirit of knowledge, showing the right; Guide us and teach us, fully to know All that in Jesus God would bestow.

Spirit so humble, Spirit so meek, Spirit so kindly, helping the weak; Work in and through us; make us to be Lowly and loving, yielding to Thee.

Spirit of power, Spirit of God,
Spirit of burning, work through Thy Word;
Search us and sift us, spare not the dross,
Show us that self life ends at the cross.

(Poem by Daniel W. Whittle)
David Royer
Goshen, Indiana

WHAT IS GOD DOING IN MY LIFE?

Perhaps it is dangerous to try to classify Christians with such terms as carnal, on fire, weak, mature, and lukewarm, etc. Sometimes it is necessary, however, to at least look at different stages of growth and/or attitudes toward the Christian life so that some very important principles about our relationship to God can be better understood. I want to

examine some of these differences briefly as concerns the work of God on our inner nature.

Many Christians in today's world see the work of God in their life as a rescue task; and once they're saved, their main interest, as far as their relationship to God, is to maintain their "faith" well enough to enter heaven after this life is over. At least two very sad results come from this: First of all, these people draw the greatest part of their daily satisfaction from their earthly pursuits and not from their relationship with God. Secondly, they are often much more concerned about conformity to their group's standards and opinions, and compare themselves among themselves rather than being concerned about God's perfect will for their lives and His opinion about their daily activities.

Then there are those zealous Christians who have caught a vision for Christian service. They believe that they have been saved to serve and are willing to sacrifice and labor arduously to see whatever Christian endeavor that they are involved in, is developed to its utmost potential. Here lie some pitfalls as well. Zeal in itself is not spirituality. The Apostle Paul could testify to that. Many zealous people are contentious with others who get in their way. Many struggle with feelings of superiority over those who aren't involved in the same way in Christian service. Also, there is a tendency to receive motivation and satisfaction from the "success" of the task at hand and not from a personal relationship with God. I believe that this is what Jesus was cautioning the disciples about when they returned from a missionary tour, flushed with enthusiasm and zeal, feeling the deep satisfaction of having participated in the ministry of Jesus, and probably very excited about future possibilities. In Luke 10:70 we read, "And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." Jesus rejoiced with them, but added this

caution, "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." (Luke 10:20)

I would like to suggest that the proper concern of the Christian is not what I can do for God, and certainly not merely making it through to heaven but rather a brokenness before the presence of God that desires and seeks for God to work in our hearts a transforming work that will impart, in a growing way, the very nature of Christ. The question isn't, What can I do for God? but rather, What will I allow God to do in me?

When the overriding passion of one's life is to know God and be known of God, some very beautiful things begin to happen: Firstly, it is a very humbling experience. Think of the story of the life of Isaiah the prophet. He was very zealous for God's cause, but when he received a vision of God in chapter six of Isaiah, it so humbled him that he cried out, "Woe is me! for I am undone!" (6:5)

Another blessing of a broken heart is that service for God is rendered out of an inner passion of love for God, and the strength and vigor comes from a daily experience of being before the throne of God, not through fleshly human efforts. A broken-hearted Christian is concerned, not about his own glory, but for the glory of God. He takes a stand for what God says, not for what seems acceptable to the status quo.

So many things could be mentioned about this important principle of what matters in the Christian experience, but I'll cite just one more in this editorial. The vision for the future is not retirement, nor the final reaching of a goal but rather an advancement, a maturing of a relationship that has already begun. Entering heaven, while terminating our earthly pilgrimage, though true, by no means will be the end of our service and of life with our Lord that has endless possibilities as we fulfil with perfect rapture forever the very reason for which we were created.

Some questions in closing: Do you desire God to work deeply in your life? What has He touched in your life the last few years? Do you serve Him out of obligation or out of love? Can you say without doubt, "I'm filled with the Holy Spirit of God"? I hope you share this same burden: the desire to have as much of the divine nature of Jesus Christ developed in your daily walk of life as is possible for a human to have this side of heaven and to know that nothing else matters as much. "But this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." (Phil. 3:13-15a)

By Duane Eby in the Mennonite Air Missions Newsletter Selected by Dr. Tom Anderson

CORRECTION

In a letter from Kevin Garber, he has asked to have a confession printed regarding an error he made in the article "An Experience to Remember" in the March, 1994, Pilgrim. We reprint the article here both to correct the error and because the experience is worth remembering. Kevin writes:

Dear Leslie,

Greetings in Jesus' name. I hope this finds you well. I'm writing in regards to an encounter I had in 2-6-94. You published it under the title "An Experience to Remember." I have come under conviction again as I was traveling concerning one word which I said I said, that I didn't say. In the line that said, "He was totally good, just and upright," the word "good" here was added later as I wrote this writing. I can't justify myself; it was a lie. In seeking the Lord for forgiveness I was not given peace until I resolved to confess it publicly. Please

print this. I would rather be embarrassed before men than before God. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (I John 1:9)

In Christian love, Kevin Garber

AN EXPERIENCE TO REMEMBER

On February 6, 1994, I stopped at the AM-PM gas station west of Riverbank at approximately 9:45 p.m. I got gas, used the restroom, and when I came out I met two guys who accused me of running them off the road. The biggest one did most of the talking while the other one stood kind of behind me. Right off I knew I had trouble, so I started telling them about Jesus, that He died for them, and that they couldn't afford to die without Him, that He was their only hope. I said that all the misery and violence and pain was the result of sin, and Jesus died because of it. They asked me where Jesus was and what was He like. I said He was at the right hand of God the Father, and also in my heart, that He was totally just, and upright, and that He was coming soon for His people. threatened to take me in the bathroom and shoot me through the mouth. I said I wasn't afraid to die and that if they killed me, I would go to be with Jesus. I said, in fact, I would rather leave this world of sin and be with Jesus. I think most of the battle passed by when they saw I wasn't afraid of them or afraid to die. At least once he reached his hand to his back pocket, but never brought anything out. I told them my God was all powerful, and that they couldn't hurt me unless He allowed them to. I said all have sinned; that's why Jesus came. He said his mother just died, and was I calling her a sinner? I said everyone has sinned except Jesus. He asked me why God would allow his mother to die since she never did anything

wrong. I said, "He is God and I'm not. I can't tell you why she died." I'm not sure how long it lasted--I think fifteen to twenty minutes. He ended up telling me several times I was very lucky, and the other one said they got the wrong guy. I said, "If you don't remember anything else, remember: You can't afford to die without Jesus and His blood covering your life." We ended up by shaking hands, and I told them I had no hard feelings. The more quiet one who stood behind me was visibly touched when we parted. Praise God for His grace and mercy.

Kevin Garber Twain Harte, California

GOD'S PRISM

The prism is a small device Through which the light does flow; And then upon the other side, It's many colors glow.

Thus God in wisdom has designed, His love through us should flow, That those who see the deeds we do, Will see the heavenly glow.

The prism does not make the light; Just lets it pass on through. In light, is where the colors are; Not in what prisms do.

Just so, 'tis not some good in us
That draws the sinner in;
But heavenly love, that shines on through,
His heart to touch, and win.

- James Beery

FOR YOUTH: MOUNTAIN CLIMBING

Most folks climb mountains for the pleasure they receive in the panoramic view at the top. But these folks, in Bible days, went up for some other reasons. The reasons are stated; the names of the mountains are for you to figure out!

- (1) When the flood abated, Noah and his family were still in the ark--but the ark wasn't floating any more; it was resting upon this mountain!
- (2) A "contest" between the true God of Heaven and the false gods of Baal took place on this mountain.
- (3) The Lord came down upon this mountain, and Moses went up to meet Him and receive the Ten Commandments.
- (4) This mountain was the scene of Christ's Ascension into Heaven and the apostles came down it after Christ had gone up.
- (5) It was upon this mountain that Abraham was about to offer his only son Isaac as a sacrifice.
- (6) Moses saw a strange, supernatural sight on this mountain-- a burning bush that didn't burn up!

Answers:

- (1) Genesis 8:4
- (2) I Kings 18:19-40
- (3) Exodus 19:20
- (4) Acts 1:1-2
- (5) Genesis 22:2
- (6) Exodus 3:1-5

--By Roy J. Wilkins Selected from The Sunday School Herald

Living an example leaves little time for criticism of others.

--Selected

CHILDREN'S PAGE: SUPPERTIME WITH JOSEPH

Screeeeeech . . . Thud! Alarmed, Daddy and Matthew jumped up from their supper and rushed to the window to see what happened. A pickup had hit a deer. The deer was badly injured and needed to be butchered. The man and boy in the pickup were not hurt, but the grill and a headlight of the truck were broken. There was an hour of excitement--flashing red and blue lights on the sheriff's car, other traffic stopping to ask what happened, talking to the game warden.

Later, as the family once more gathered around the table, that was all they could talk about. Daddy remarked that he was glad nobody was hurt. "I am, too," said Joseph. "I think I'll have nightmares about it tonight. Maybe I won't even be able to sleep!"

"Just don't think about it," was Matthew's advice.

"But I can't help it!" Joseph stated. "It's just there, in my mind!"

"You can chase those thoughts out of your mind, Joseph," began Mother. "You've learned a number of Bible verses that would be good to think about instead. 'The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want,' and 'What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.' And songs! Just think about the songs 'Jesus Loves Me' and 'God Will Take Care of You."

Daddy thoughtfully spoke, "Be thankful, Joseph, that you have better things to think about. Many children don't know even one Bible verse, nor any nice, comforting songs. Their parents don't either. Those poor children and their parents just have to live with fear in their minds. Sometimes they try to drown out the fearful thoughts with alcoholic drink, drugs, parties, and wild fun. But those things don't last long, and soon they have the fearful thoughts again. We can have peace in our hearts all the time because we know Jesus and have God's Word to hide in our hearts and think about! 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee." --Linda Frick

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES; TRUTH VERSUS DECEPTION

Truth is what all men desire. Where truth is upheld and lived is where the blessings of God are experienced. It is where faithfulness and trust are experienced in relationships, and in confidence and trust we commit ourselves to one another. This is the basis and foundation of true fellowship with God and one another.

It is where the Scriptures are held as the only authority on truth, and it stands the test against all untruth. Not all men believe this. Either in word or act they declare something different. The result is the misery of alienating society from one another and from God.

There are two reasons why men have rejected Biblical truth and absolutes. The one is unbelief in God; the other is their deception by the father of untruth. (John 8:44)

Jesus, being the truth, was concerned about what would take place in our time, and He taught that we shouldn't be caught in the snare of deception.

Man has no problem with the truth and law of gravity -- because of the immediate consequences

Sodomy has become an accepted life style and is making inroads in the so-called Christian community, and because they lie against the truth, they are helpless to be delivered. Some claim they have no problem or that God created them this way. The only way a believer can submit to this is having been deceived. "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." To claim this fellowship and not prove it is lying against the truth. It is the same state of deception as the ones that are helpless in sodomy. The truth is that the consequences will be the same.

"But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." (John 3:21)

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." (I Peter 1:22)

-- Kenneth Martin

Anything allowed in the heart which is contrary to the will of God, let it seem ever so insignificant, or be ever so deeply hidden, will sooner or later rob us of our communion and fellowship with Him.

-- From John Strickler's collection

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"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." I Peter 2:11

SO SEND I YOU

So send I you to labor unrewarded, To serve unpaid, unloved, unsought, unknown, To bear rebuke, to suffer scorn and scoffing--So send I you to toil for Me alone.

So send I you to bind the bruised and broken, O'er wand'ring souls to work, to weep, to wake, To bear the burdens of a world a-weary--So send I you to suffer for My sake.

So send I you to loneliness and longing, With heart a-hung'ring for the loved and known, Forsaking home and kindred, friend and dear one--So send I you to know My love alone.

So send I you to leave your life's ambition, To die to dear desire, self-will resign, To labor long and love where men revile you--So send I you to lose your life in Mine.

So send I you to hearts made hard by hatred, To eyes made blind because they will not see, To spend--though it be blood--to spend and spare not--So send I you to tasté of Calvary.

--E. Margaret Clarkson
"As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." --John 20:21

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FRUIT

Fruit is pouring into bins and bags in this harvest season in the central valley of California. The abundant harvest is a product of diligent effort to care for the orchards--to plant, prune, irrigate, fertilize, and bring in the product. And yet all the labor will not produce the fruit without God's blessing. Paul writes (I Cor. 3:6): "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." He compares the care a farmer gives his crops to the care the Christian Church must have and the blessing God must give in order to produce fruit.

Besides care and labor, there must be preparation before a crop can be planted. This central valley of California was once a desert. It took planning, engineering, and multiple thousands of dollars to develop the irrigation systems, level the fields, and make the desert blossom and bear fruit. So it is in the spiritual field. With great cost God made a way for man to be fruitful to Him.

A farmer plants an orchard for one purpose: the harvest. It is pleasing to drive by a new orchard or vineyard and see the accurately-placed rows lined up in every direction. We like to watch these trees develop each year with deep green leaves showing the fertilizing and timely watering the farmer gives. And yet a pleasing appearance is not enough. The farmer plants to receive fruit. Green leaves will not pay bills.

In our lives as well, God looks for fruit. He made the preparation when He gave His only Son to die in our place. Now He cares for us so faithfully, and He expects a harvest. Jesus told of the fig tree on which the owner found no fruit. He said to the dresser of the vineyard, "Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" The answer of the caretaker:

"Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down." What mercy and patience our heavenly Father has for us! But there is also a warning we need to hear in this parable: God expects fruit, whether the field be Israel, the Church, or individual Christians.

Jesus used other parables about fruit bearing, and the people understood well what He meant because this was a vital part of their daily life. In 1960 only about one-eighth of the people of the United States lived on farms, and it is even less today. But almost everyone works with plants in some way or has at least a small garden. His teaching is clear.

In John 15, Jesus says, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." In several ways in this same chapter He tells us that we must be connected to Him or we cannot bear fruit--in fact, He says, ". . . Without me ye can do nothing." We cut off a branch from a tree and it dies; it cannot produce anything. Without Jesus we are dead branches. But when we have life from Him and are growing branches, we can bear much fruit.

We know we are dependent on Jesus for life. What then is our part in this fruit bearing? We are compared to a branch, and in some parables, the soil. Are we then completely passive-without responsibility or action? Beginning with Adam and Eve and Cain, men and women have always been held responsible for their deeds. We could not survive the consequences of our actions if it weren't for God's mercy and grace through Jesus' shed blood. Even the fig tree in Jerusalem was cursed when Jesus found no fruit on it. But when we are supplied with God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit, it is possible as new creatures to bear fruit to the glory of God. Our part is to

deny our selfish interests, take up the cross, and yield our lives to Him.

In His Word are listed the fruits God looks for. Galatians 5:22,23 names love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Hebrews 12:11 mentions the "peaceable fruit of righteousness." These fruits are expressed to others by deeds of kindness, sharing, praise to God, and faithful living. It is easy to see that by ourselves we cannot produce such good fruit. We tend to expect these good things in others but make excuses for our own failures. How dependent we are upon our heavenly Father!

Perhaps one form of fruit bearing is in the generations following. One old brother expressed his thankfulness when his sons chose to serve in God's Kingdom. He said, "When I see my boys serving the Lord, it makes me feel as if I am bearing fruit."

Jesus said in Luke 6:44, "For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes." In verse 46, He said, "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" God knows our hearts. And it is a sad part of humanity when we claim to be good trees and children of God, and do not follow Jesus in obedience.

When we look at a well-cared-for almond orchard loaded with nuts, we don't honor the trees; we think of a diligent farmer who really knows how to raise almonds. So it is if our lives are bearing fruit. The glory and the credit go to the One who made us and enables us to act in obedience to Him.

As we enjoy the luscious peaches and grapes, and preserve for winter the fruit so abundant, let us not forget the lessons God gives regarding our own lives. Is there any fruit for God's glory? Are we barren trees? May we yield to God's pruning and careful tending that we may bear fruit for Him. --L.C

TEACHING AND ADMONISHING . . . IN SINGING

Recently we attended a meeting nearby where the sermon subject was on attitudes. The word "attitude," is not in the Scriptures, and is found only once in our hymnbook. (Hymn 216) The day after this meeting this song was repeatedly in our minds. This made us think of the power of song as a teaching tool -- a thought we will attempt to share.

In two of his epistles, the apostle brother exhorts us to teach and admonish one another with singing (See Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19). In I Cor. 14:26 he makes mention that members of the Body, in an effort to edify one another, often have a psalm selection or original composition to share. Earlier he says singing is to be with understanding (vs. 15). The overall emphasis goes back to the principle that as members of Christ's Body, we are to teach and admonish one another to a life in Christ, full of grace, good works, truth, love, purity, and wholesomeness. We are to think on these things. (Phil. 4:8)

One cannot deny that music has great power. Anyone who has ever had a song repeatedly pass through their mind can testify of music's subconscious effect. We believe group singing promotes unity. Maybe some can remember the childhood song "When we all work...play...together--how happy we'll be." Perhaps we could say "sing" also. Music, with its emotional qualities, increases communal working and cooperation that is wholesome and healing. It has been said a singing church is a growing church. Many in the past -- the Anabaptists, the Moravian Brethren, and the Wesleys -- have been particularly noted for their singing and music, and obviously they knew its effectiveness.

This makes music an important issue, and critical that it follow apostolic injunction. Peter Rideman in his 1545 Rechenschaft" says under "Concerning Singing": "For this

reason we say that to sing spiritual songs is good and pleasing to God if we sing in the right way, that is, attentively, in the fear of God and as inspired by the Spirit of Christ, for it is for this reason that they are called spiritual songs... (they)...attract and move men to blessedness... He...who singeth in the Spirit considereth every word, how far and whither it goeth, why it hath been used and how it may serve to his betterment. He who doeth this singeth to the Lord's praise, to the betterment of both himself and others, and as an instigation to a godly life." This singing in the Spirit is contrasted with singing in the letter, a lifeless form. Let's consider for a moment our church book....

First, we begin the Christian life by beholding "a Stranger at the door" (216) knocking. Then the one who answers can say, "How happy every child of grace." (217) and sing the baptism song "Jesus all the day long is my joy and my song." (220) For those who are lingering and rejecting the call to follow the Christ with their all, there are pleas (223, 226, etc...) There are exhortations to the believing community to "bear each other's load" (302) so that we can truly say "Courage, brother do not stumble." (537) We must "search our ways and see; Have they been just and right" (508) and "watch my tongue, lest I let slip one sinful word, Or do my neighbor wrong.(513) There is comfort for those who have left all --wealth, ambition, friends, family, self (225,545) to be the true disciples of Christ, counting the cost, which fits and describes any and every true believer, (543) to be faithful to the "ancient order, And the one faith of the Church" (558), and to be quiet, gentle, and sober. those who are true to this narrow way are the true possessors who will be accepted, although many profess. (543) Think on hymn 542. It is both sobering and reassuring. Hymn 544 is a prayer for life in Zion, where healing is found, as well as refuge for one who has sought the world around (501). These can testify "Dear church, I love thee, yes I do,...to thee may I be ever true, nor dare thy rules ignore...the pilgrim's resting place"

(275) gloriously foretold of prophets and sages of old, of which "our fathers oft have told...(of) wonders in their days performed, And elder times than theirs." (553) This regenerated heart, an inhabitant of Zion, can sing the glory of Christ and His Body in the magnificent words of Hymn 279. Beloved, we could go on and on. There is so much. Just search for yourselves.

The Christian Hymnary, as well as many others, are also full of wonderful teachings. For example--Because "Great is Thy Faithfulness" (100), the redeemed can also sing "Thy way and all thy sorrows, give thou into His hands" (341). The one who has done this will "strive aright" (276) to "press on to perfection" (281). This entails determination eternally for God (818). This shuts out "fear of feeble man" (252) constraining men to come to Christ and His Body. Pride must be destroyed (415) or God will give stern Judgment (414)--these latter two are martyr hymns. True Christians cannot harbor hate or envy (416), not of forced faith, but of willing heart and promise sealed through water baptism for life. Take a look at the hymnbooks and their subject headings. It's a thrilling realization that the apostles' teachings are being upheld in worthy hymns.

In the 1969 Moravian Brethren hymnal a quote from Nicholas Ludwig van Zinzendorf says: "The hymnal is a kind of response to the Bible, an echo and extension thereof. In the Bible one perceives how the Lord communicated with mankind; and in the hymnal, how mankind communicated with the Lord."

In view of this we should then realize our music is serious business. We do not mean the false piety and seriousness that pretends to be religious. This is disgusting and no less than hypocrisy. The apostle James says singing is to pour forth from a *joyful* heart!! (James 5:13) The Psalms echo this over and over! But it is to be decent and in order as everything else is to be done. (I Cor.14:40) It is imperative that our music be of sound doctrine, becoming to the godly, and inspirational unto

holiness in life. This does away with cheap and giddy music that might claim to be religious.

At the first we mentioned how a hymn repeatedly was in our minds, exhorting us subconsciously. We believe this is one way of following the apostle's teaching that we *exhort* one another *DAILY*! No, this is no substitute at all for personal involvement, but is just a means to help accomplish this end. All who love God keep His commandments and love one another. Because we love one another, we are anxious to have daily interaction. Because the times are evil we need one another's support, no less now than when the apostle wrote this. (Heb. 3:13-15: 10:25-27) Singings are one means to an end. A hymn can often speak to us for whatever peculiar situation we happen to be in at the moment. It behooves us to make right choices, and to sing our best.

We hope the following words can burn in your heart, and it is our hope that for all of us in our dear fraternity that our music and singing would serve to accomplish this end.

We would be building; temples still undone O'er crumbling walls their crosses scarcely lift; Waiting till love can raise the broken stone, And hearts creative bridge the human rift. We would be building; Master, let Thy plan Reveal the life that God would give to man.

Teach us to build; upon the solid rock
We set the dream that hardens into deed,
Ribbed with the steel that time and change doth mock,
The unfailing purpose of our noblest creed.
Teach us to build; O Master, lend us sight
To see the towers gleaming in the light.

O keep us building, Master; may our hands Ne'er falter when the dream is in our hearts, When to our ears there come divine commands And all the pride of sinful will departs. We build with Thee; O grant enduring worth Until the heav'nly Kingdom comes on earth.

--Purd Deitz, 1935 (Sing to the tune *Finlandia*.) --Love and greetings, Michael Harris, Arcanum, Ohio

WHAT DO YOU WRITE?

Of course you have read the Bible, and you know many others who read it. But did you know that people who never look inside the covers of the printed Bible are reading you every day?

You are writing a gospel which others will read, Each day and each hour, you ought to give heed, To all that you do, and all that you say, For, verily, you write the gospel each day.

We aren't writing a book to be printed or bound in leather covers to be placed on the pulpit in the church Sunday morning, or on a shelf in your home, but more people are reading you than who read the printed book. Think for a moment what kind of book you are writing. Your friends and neighbors and even people you don't know very well, know that you go to church, and maybe joined, or made some kind of promise. They naturally will wonder and watch to see if you keep your promises. What kind of idea will they get from watching you? People have been tempted in one way or another to see how they will act. Whether we realize it or not, we are writing every day. The Saviour you love is being judged by what you do and say as you go about your daily tasks. You have no choice in the matter of exerting influence and of writing or not writing these gospels, but you can choose what kind of influence you

will wield; what kind of gospel you will write. The written word is all important; it has come down to us inspired of God. But the living word, lived by Christ's followers throughout the world is also important, and its importance lies in the fact that everyone is reading it.

-- From Aunt Bertie's papers

THE CONTRAST

Guilty! cries our enemy!
Condemn him now to die!
He violates the precepts,
You gave him from on High.
He claims to live Your teachings;
But 'tis sometimes a lie.
He often fails his duties;
Why does he even try?

I understand I'm guilty.
He's right, my soul does know.
I do deserve to perish.
My sinfulness You show.
Oh! Will You Lord, forgive me?
My faults, they bring me low.
I want to serve You, Jesus;
To Heaven with You, I'd go.

Forgiven! cries the Savior! I shed My blood for you! I know you fail Me often, But I will see you through. I understand your struggles, For I have felt them too.

My love has made provision, So on your way pursue.

These attitudes, they contrast
Forgiveness from above
With Satan's hate and meanness,
His total lack of love.
Praise God! for His forgiveness
That comes down like the dove,
To save us from the devil
And take us up above.

-James Beery

GOD'S REMEDY

I know what's wrong with the world today: People have all thrown their Bibles away--They live by the law of the jungle--a sham, Not the way of the Lord or the law of the Lamb.

> Our Lord has said there is no excuse For lying and stealing and human abuse Yet man turns from the Lord And says, "What's the use?"

So now my brethren all you I hold dear, Our Lord's charge to us is so perfectly clear-The evil one walks in this world we know Trying to snare us and drag us below.

> So let's gather together And turn our heads above And support one another In prayer and in love.

> > -Darrell Martin Modesto, California

BLIND SIGHTED

We've traveled, dear Lord, a very long way. I've followed You closely by night and by day. Always so close, while holding Your hand. Always a glimpse of part of Your plan.

But now, Lord, it's darker than ever before.

I can't catch a glimmer of what You've in store.

I know You've not left me, though I don't feel You near.

Have I displeased You, Savior? Is that why I'm left here?

Silence surrounds me, no light for a guide. Yet I know I must follow, must stay at Your side. So, is this where the faithful are put to the test? To believe in the darkness? To fight without rest?

A blindness of sorts; oh! The aching to see, And when all is revealed, oh! What joy there will be. So I'll never stop seeking or fighting to win. Though the devil surrounds me, I'll never give in.

I'll hear when You're silent; I'll see without light.
I'll follow with faith's eyes through blackest of night.
Though my wounds pain my deeply and lonely I be,
I've yet to come close to where You've gone for me.

-- Gail J. Storkel

BAPTISMS--Eastern Congregation
Joel Royer and Caleb Royer July 6
John Brandt and Lisa Pletcher July 27
May these new members be faithful and grow in grace.

BIRTH

MARTIN -- A son, Kirt Clifton, born July 18, to Kevin and Ina Martin of New Paris, Indiana.

MARRIAGES

BRUBAKER -- COVER Eric Brubaker and Laura Cover were married July 12, at Tuolumne, California.

Their address is

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Wakarusa, IN 46573

(219) 862-4224

HUFFMAN -- COVER Philip Huffman and Rhoda Cover were married July 19, at Tuolumne, California.

Their address is

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CHILDREN'S PAGE: A House That Stands

We have all heard the story "The Three Little Pigs."

The first pig built a house of straw. The straw was quick to use and didn't cost much. But when the wolf (the adversary) came along, the straw was flimsy and didn't hold up.

The second pig built a house of sticks. The sticks were stronger and cost a little more. However, they too didn't hold up when the wolf came.

The third pig built a house of bricks. This house took more time to build. It cost more but was stronger and held up when the wolf came.

Like the three little pigs, we too can choose what to build our lives with. If we build with the things of the world, we will build with straw. Then when the adversary (the devil) comes, we won't be able to stand against him.

If we try to please the world and Christ, we will build with sticks. We will be like some people who say, "I won't go all the way with Christ, but my house is better than the house made of straw."

No, we are not pigs. But sometimes we want to do things the cheapest and quickest way. When we make decisions, let's remember the two pigs that got their houses destroyed. It pays to make good decisions. Work to build on Jesus, and then the devil can't destroy our peace, and nothing can harm us.

--Serena Foster

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

"Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." This charge is a personal obligation of all believers. The keeping of this is continually threatened by this world's values and our human nature. The security we have in this is in God's eternal truth which is revealed in His written word.

In the physical world we know well the laws of safe keeping. Our sisters know the laws of preserving fruit, meat, and vegetables. Whenever the seal is broken on a jar, or the freezer quits working, the results are unavoidable: the food will spoil. So it is in the safe keeping of Christ's love. Whenever the laws of safekeeping are violated, we have the same results as in the physical world.

The safe keeping of Christ's love can only be preserved in the environment the Scriptures cite us to. To enter this environment we must fully surrender everything we have and are--even our physical lives if need be. How we are responding to this total commitment is now the evidence of safekeeping. The proof of the safe keeping of Christ's love is visible to the world:

"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." (Matt. 5:14)

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness in to his marvellous light." (I Pet. 2:9)

"Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." (ICor. 15:33)

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." (James 4:4)

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (I John 2:15)

"Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." (Phil. 2:2-4)

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (James 5:16)

"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of

remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." (Mal. 3:16)

"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet." (John 13:14)

"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is: but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." (Heb. 10:24,25)

"Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." (I Pet. 3:8)

"Wherefore, comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do." (I Thess. 5:11)

"But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled." (I Pet. 3:14)

Wanting to preserve the love of Christ in our hearts and ignoring the law of preserving it, is just as foolish as trying to preserve food without a seal.

-- Kenneth Martin

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VOL. 44 SEPTEMBER, 1997 No. 9
"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from

fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." I Peter 2:11

HEART GRATITUDE

My God, I thank Thee who hast made
The earth so bright.
So full of splendor, and of joy,
Beauty and light,
So many glorious things are here,
Noble and right.

I thank Thee, too, that Thou hast made
Joy to abound;
So many gentle thoughts and deeds
Circling us 'round;
That in the darkest hours on earth
Love may be found.

I thank Thee more that all our joy
Is touched with pain;
That shadows fall on brightest hours;
That thorns remain;
So that earth's bliss may be our guide
And not our chain.

I thank Thee, Lord, that Thou hast kept
The best in store;
We have enough, yet not too much
To long for more;
A yearning for a deeper peace
Not known before.
--Frederick Charles Maker, 1876

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TEMPTATION

Temptation is an offered opportunity to do wrong. It is an experience common to all responsible people, rich or poor, male or female, young or old. Behind it is the enemy of God-the enemy of our souls-the one who tempted our Savior and the faithful of the past--Satan-that old serpent the devil.

In our better moments it is easy to denounce him. He appears repulsive when we are close to the Lord. But alone, like a lamb leaving the flock, we are vulnerable, and then Satan wears his disguise, and his evil propositions appear as something desirable.

It happened to Eve. She evidently was alone when the serpent presented his enticement. And the forbidden fruit, which should have been repulsive to her, appeared as something good with enjoyable results: she would be wise!

Temptation comes in various forms, as we all know so well. It stalks into our various areas of experience which are thoughts, words, and actions.

Though our thoughts are not deeds, they are none the less real. Our Savior, in His famous Sermon on the Mount, said that to be angry with our brother without a cause and to denounce him as a fool (Here are sins in thought and word.) is dangerous even though we would not kill him in transgression of the law. He said we can sin in our hearts by lusting after a woman, even though we would not break the law by carrying out the act. The point is that many can see (and gossip about) an outward act of sin. Some will hear our wrong words. But our wrong thoughts, though no one hears or sees, are also sin in God's sight. He sees and knows.

Sometimes we are tempted to neglect things we should do. These are sins of *omission*. It is the easy way to forget to share with others--our time, attention, and love. It costs less to keep what should be our offerings or tithes. To be silent when we should speak out may not get us so easily in trouble, but it is also a sin of omission.

And then there is the temptation to be proud even though we have so little to be proud of. Pride and humility are opposites; one is Satan's offer, the other God's will for us.

Immediately after His baptism by John, Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. There He fasted for forty days, and Satan harassed Him with temptation the whole time. The three recorded propositions of Satan seem to be at the end of the forty days when He was weak and hungry. Hebrews 4:15 states that He "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

We are told in James 1:13 that "God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man." But Jesus, in His role as a man, was tempted in every way we are. When we feel drawn to lust or pride or envy or anger, let us remember with reverence and gratitude that Jesus went through this too and came out victorious. We might think, "Oh, but He is God and had the power to resist, and I don't." Let us remember that He was a man and that it would have been no temptation to Him if it would have been impossible for Him to yield.

Let us also be reminded that God has made the power available to us, too. This promise is given in I Cor. 10:13: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

Besides the forty days of acute temptation, Jesus had it throughout His ministry. Consider the following situations, and decide what you would have done, remembering that Jesus' sensitivity and knowledge of justice is greater than ours.

- 1.) Passing through Samaria on His way to Jerusalem (Luke 9:51-56), Jesus was not received by the people of one village. They may have insulted Him as a Jew or at least ignored Him. His disciples James and John wondered if they should call down fire upon them as Elijah had done centuries before. Jesus, not yielding to this meting out justice without mercy, rebuked James and John saying, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." They went to another village.
- 2.) Jesus denounced the Pharisee leaders for their hypocrisy. It would have been easier to say nothing and not brought down their wrath, but He resisted the easy way and did His Father's will.
- 3.) Over and over His disciples failed to believe Him and misunderstood His message. Peter rebuked Him for telling them He was going to Jerusalem to die. Jesus must have been strongly tempted to lose patience with them. But He overcame in this point as well.

Perhaps Jesus' greatest temptation came in the Garden of Gethsemane where He wrestled and won victory to carry out the plan of the Father to drink the bitter cup of suffering for crimes He did not commit. He "became sin for us" and accepted the curse of hanging on a tree like a sinner, though He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." How forever thankful we should be that He overcame. Even on the cross they taunted Him to show His power and come down. Thanks be to God for His perseverance and victory over every form of temptation.

Satan capitalizes on our weaknesses. We like to be respected, to have friends. To this end we are tempted to be like the worldly around us. The easy way is to merge into the

crowd, take up the world's fashions, and think like those on the broad road. But Jesus calls us to come out from among them to be His special people. He says in His word to love not the world and its lusts.

When we are truly separated from "the world" is when we can minister to the needs around us. Some would say it is the other way around--that we must be like other people to help them. One brother remarked that a doctor does not become sick like his patients to help them. No, he is trained to diagnose the problem and prescribe a remedy. That remedy is Jesus. Satan will do all he can to tempt us to bypass the remedy or to even ignore the fact that there is a problem.

Many of our temptations come when we are alone. When our thoughts run to evil, it may be a thrill to the flesh, but how it corrupts our pure minds! How much time it wastes when we could be thinking on the good things of Philippians 4:8!

Another form of temptation is in pretense or show. The Pharisees were deceived by this false value, but it is just as prevalent in our time. We become critical of others and value the show of wealth or knowledge. Even the poor are not immune. "But they that will be rich fall into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in perdition." (I Tim. 6:9)

God has a "way to escape" for every temptation that can attack us. In one of John Bunyan's allegories, the young soldier is being assailed by an enemy (temptation). He fights a losing battle alone until he remembers that the Lord had given him a silver trumpet called prayer which he blows to summon immediate help. The Savior told His disciples (Luke 22:40): "Pray that ye enter not into temptation." Prayer is one of our defenses.

When Satan tempted Jesus, to every one of the propositions Jesus answered, "It is written..." We too can use the Word of God if we have hidden it in our hearts. To be armored in this

way we need to study and even memorize the Word that we might call it to rescue us in our hour of trial.

A third defense is the treasury of hymns we know. Many of these words and even tunes were conceived in the midst of severe struggles by devout men and women of the past. They can help us too as we sing through the struggles with the adversary.

Let us never forget that God sees us in our straits and hears us when we call. We have this assurance of James 1:12: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." --L.C.

GOD WORKS IN US

The maturity of a Christian experience cannot be reached in a moment, but is the result of the work of God's Holy Spirit, who, by His energizing and transforming power, causes us to grow up into Christ in all things. And we cannot hope to reach this maturity in any way other than by yielding ourselves up, utterly and willingly, to His mighty working. But the sanctification the Scriptures urge, as a present experience upon all believers does not consist in maturity of growth, but in purity of heart; and this may be as complete in the early as in our later experiences.

The lump of clay, from the moment it comes under the transforming hand of the potter, is, during each day and each hour of the process, just what the potter wants it to be at that hour or on that day, and therefore pleases him, but it is very far from being matured into the vessel he intends in the future to make it.

The little babe may be all that a babe could be, or ought to be, and may therefore perfectly please its mother, and yet it is very far from being what that mother would wish it to be when the years of maturity shall come.

The apple in June is a perfect apple for June; it is the best apple that June can produce; but it is very different from the apple in October, which is a perfected apple.

God's works are perfect in every stage of their growth. Man's works are never perfect until they are in every respect complete.

All that we claim, then, in this life of sanctification is that by an act of faith we put ourselves into the hands of the Lord, for Him to work in us all the good pleasure of His will, and then, by a continuous exercise of faith, keep ourselves there. This is our part in the matter. And when we do it, and while we do it, we are, in the Scripture sense, truly pleasing to God, although it may require years of training and discipline to mature us into a vessel that shall be in all respects to His honor, and fitted to every good work.

Our part is the trusting; it is His to accomplish the results. And when we do our part, He never fails to do His, for no one ever trusted in the Lord and was confounded. Do not be afraid. then, that, if you trust, or tell others to trust, the matter will end there. Trust is the beginning and the continuing foundation; but when we trust, the Lord works, and His work is the important part of the whole matter. And this explains that apparent paradox which puzzles so many. They say, "In one breath you tell us to do nothing but trust, and in the next you tell us to do impossible things. How can you reconcile such contradictory statements?" They are to be reconciled, just as we reconcile the statements concerning a saw in a carpenter's shop when we say, at one moment, that the saw has sawn asunder a log, and the next moment declare that the carpenter has done. it. The saw is the instrument used; the power that uses it is the carpenter's And so we, yielding ourselves unto God, and our members as instruments of righteousness unto Him, find that He works in us

to will and to do of His good pleasure, and we can say with Paul, "I labored; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me "

In the divine order, God's working depends upon our cooperation. Of our Lord it was declared that at a certain place He could do there no mighty work because of their unbelief. It was not that He would not, but He could not. I believe we often think of God that He will not, when the real truth is that He cannot. Just as the potter, however skilful, cannot make a beautiful vessel out of a lump of clay that is never put into his hands, so neither can God make out of me a vessel unto His honor unless I put myself into His hands. My part is the essential correlation of God's part in the matter of my salvation; and as God is sure to do His part all right, the vital thing for me is to find out what my part is, and then do it.

-from *The Christian's Secret Of A Happy Life* by Hannah Whitall Smith

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BIRTH

ROYER -- A daughter, Sylvia Jean, born August 26, to Sam and Rosanna Royer of Nappanee, Indiana.

THE COMING DAY

There'll come a day when the supremest splendor Of earth or sky or sea,

Whate'er their miracles, sublime or tender, Will wake no joys in me.

There'll come a day when all the aspiration Now with such fervor fraught

As lifts to heights of breathless exaltation, Will seem a thing of naught.

There'll come a day when riches, honor, glory, Music, and song, and art,

Will look like puppets in a worn out story Where each has played his part.

There'll come a day when human love, the sweetest Gift that includes the whole

Of God's grand giving--sovereignest, completest--Shall fail to fill my soul.

There'll come a day--I shall not care how passes
The cloud across my sight

If only, lark like, from earth's nested grasses I spring to meet its light.

--Selected from J.M. Kimmel's Scrap Book

Tonight, my soul, be still and sleep; The storms are raging on God's deep--God's deep, not thine; be still and sleep.

--Selected

GODLY OBEDIENCE = HAPPINESS

"Happy are ye," the Savior said; If you will do the things you know. What I have done; the way I led; If you'd be blest; then you must go.

*Tis not enough, to just believe; The blessing comes, when we obey. And when we learn, but won't receive--A truth from Him; we fall away.

In humble faith, may we each day, Walk in the way, that He has shown. Just not enough, the words we say; For by our deeds, shall we be known.

"Happy you'll be,"the Savior said; When life is o'er, and I return, And on that day, raise up the dead, And all your deeds, do there discern-

What joy you'll feel, if I then say-"To others ye, good deeds have done;
Come, enter life. You've kept my ways,
And through my strength, the vict'ry won!"

-- James Beery

If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.
Psalm 66:18

THE LORD WILL PROVIDE

In some way or other the Lord will provide;
It may not be my way,
It may not be thy way,
And yet in his own way
The Lord will provide.

At some time or other the Lord will provide;
It may not be my time,
It may not be thy time,
And yet in His own time
The Lord will provide.

Despond then no longer, the Lord will provide;
And this be the token:
No word He hath spoken
Was ever yet broken.
The Lord will provide.

March on then, right boldly; the sea shall divide;
The pathway made glorious,
With shoutings victorious;
We'll join in the chorus:
The Lord will provide!

-M.A.W. Cook Selected by Sharon See

Study the Bible to be wise; believe it to be safe; practice it to be holy.

--Selected

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES BAPTISM

The question is often asked, "Is water baptism a requirement of salvation?" How should we value its importance? What are the requirements before we can receive it?

Jesus made it clear that except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. The question was raised, "How can this be? Can a man enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born again?" Jesus replied that unless we be born of water and the Spirit, we cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

To be born physically and be alive there are two absolutes present--water and the breath of life. Water is the physical law, the breath of life is the spiritual law. There is no birth without the physical law, there is no life without the spiritual law. Physical birth is not a pleasant thing to observe or experience. Suffering and anguish are present.

Jesus, in His teaching, often used natural, physical involvement to convey a spiritual experience. He Himself proved this when He came to earth to redeem us from the power of sin and death. He could have, through the Spirit, somehow revealed to man that through spiritual experience of the mind He would suffer and die for us, and if we had faith in this promise we would be saved. He knew the suffering and death, pronounced on man, had to be dealt with in a physical way and that there was no escape for this. His physical involvement was necessary. The promise of His coming was revealed to the prophets long before it came to pass, but not until physical involvement in suffering and death was the promise fulfilled.

The Scriptures call us not only to believe in His name, but also to suffer with Him. Baptism is not a very pleasant

experience physically. The flesh in itself would reject it. In it we verbally declare His name, we bow our heads in submission to death, we experience physical burial and resurrection.

The Scriptures reveal that physical water baptism is symbolic of His death, burial, and resurrection. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." (Rom.6:3-5)

In the likeness of His death, we bow our heads in submission to death, are buried in a watery grave, and rise from this as He arose.

We know that the physical act of baptism, in itself, will not save us. We also know that the physical suffering and death of Jesus, in itself could not save or benefit us, but because of Who He was, and His obedience to its significance, is why it has saving power.

There are those that point to the thief on the cross; he didn't have water baptism but had salvation. The statement that he made on the cross that saved him, we also make at baptism. He acknowledged his sin and accepted physical death as justice-then called on the name of the Lord. This would indicate that if he had the opportunity to receive water baptism he would have requested it.

In water baptism we also confess our sins and bow our head in recognition to physical death as justice. Our peace now with physical death (which is waiting for all of us) and faith in the atonement of Jesus is what makes us a new creature in Christ Jesus. This faith is what gives us strength to overcome the flesh while we live physically. It cleanses us from all our sins and gives us a good conscience before God.

THE PILGRIM

Obedience to physical water baptism, and all its significance is what saves us. The wrath of God is awaiting those that refuse. (I Pet. 3:21; John 3:36)

--Kenneth Martin

YOUTH PAGE: TRIED IN THE FIRE Daniel 3

Three Hebrew men stood in the midst of the crowd In the heat of the Babylon sun, While others bent low to an idol of gold When the first strains of music'd begun.

Their conscience denied them to follow the rules; To obey heathen kings, they could not, For they'd long ago chosen the One they would serve-God of youth they hadn't forgot.

Then the king in his rage made loud the command That the furnace be heated still more, And three men were bound and thrown into the fire But the king saw not three men, but four!

And 'tis still true today when the music is played-If you're hearing a whole different song, You'll not bow the knee to the idols of men; To compromise conscience is wrong.

And the fire will get hot whenever you stand For the things that you know to be right, But all that will burn is the bindings of men, To be free is a beautiful sight!

For the Lord surely walks by your side in the fire His blessed assurance to give,
And when you stand true--even though you could die,
You'll have Jesus for whom you can live!
-Gloria Wilde

CHILDREN'S PAGE

PRETTY SWEATER or PRETTY HEART?

"Mama, look at that pretty, pink sweater!" Elaine tugged at Mama's hand and pointed to the store window they were passing. Mama glanced at the sweater, but did not slow down for a second look. "Mama, I want a sweater like that one, with lots of shiny jewels on it," Elaine begged. "I'd look so pretty wearing it!"

Mama looked at her young daughter soberly as they walked on toward the hardware store. Quietly she said, "Elaine dear, it's not what you wear that makes you beautiful, but what is in your heart. Thinking and doing nice things puts a pleasant expression on your face. That is true beauty."

Driving home, Mama brought up the subject again. "Elaine, do you want to see how many jewels you can put into your heart?"

"Oh, yes, Mama. But how can I put jewels into my heart?" queried Elaine.

"It's quite easy to put God's kind of jewels into your heart, but you will probably have to think about it and make an effort. Each little kind thing you do will add a jewel to your heart in Daddy's and Mama's eyes. And it will please God, too. Do you think you can find any jewels to put in yet tonight?" Mama smiled at Elaine.

Soberly, Elaine stared out of the front window, thinking hard. Suddenly, she said, "Would it be a jewel in my heart if I helped carry these sacks into the house?"

"It certainly would," Mama answered.

-Linda Frick Gettysburg, Ohio

COMMUNION MEETING NOTICES

We the members of the Eastern District of the Old Brethren have appointed October 4 and 5, the Lord willing, for our Lovefeast at our meeting house near Wakarusa, Indiana, and November 1 and 2, for our Lovefeast in the meeting house near Bradford, Ohio. We extend a hearty welcome to all our members and friends to attend these meetings.

-- Melvin Coning

We the members of the Old Brethren Church in California, have agreed to hold our Fall Lovefeast, the Lord willing, at Salida on October 18 and 19. We sincerely welcome all to come and be with us at this time of communion and revival.

-- Joseph L. Cover

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"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." I Peter 2:11

THANKSGIVING

Lord, to Thee in solemn lays
Our songs of gratitude arise;
Accept our grateful heartfelt praise,
Our prayer and humble sacrifice.

Thy gracious kindly loving care We see on every hand abounds; Thy blessings all Thy creatures share, And all their daily path surrounds.

Oh can thanksgiving's joyful song This gracious good of Thine repay, Thy mercy that has waited long, Thy strict account to us delay?

We thank Thee for Thy Word of power That all Thy promises reveal To help us in each trying hour And slothful hearts and lips unseal.

We thank Thee for salvation free To all who will to Thee confess; We yield our hearts and lives to Thee, Thy saving power and righteousness.

We long to see our coming King And dwell with Thee forevermore; We now to Thee thanksgiving bring, Henceforth to honor and adore.

-J.I. Cover

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A THANKFUL HEART

Oh, give us all a thankful heart; Help us from evil to depart; Our daily meat, Lord, let it be Thy will to do and follow Thee.

The table hymn is sung and the father expresses thanks for the bountiful meal. It is Thanksgiving Day in one of the many Brethren homes. The family has gathered. Children are excited at the thought of good things to eat and playing together after the meal. The sisters have spent hours preparing delicious food --pies, vegetables, cranberry sauce, and the turkey, rich with brown gravy. You know the setting.

Our nation annually proclaims a day of thanksgiving. It is observed by all--even unbelievers. We appreciate this tradition which dates back to the Pilgrims in Massachusetts and calls attention to the source of our blessings--our provident God.

But the proclamation, the tradition, the gatherings, and feasts will not generate in us thankful hearts. Our verse says, "Give us all a thankful heart," and I doubt that it can come from any place but from God.

A thankful heart is a converted heart. The carnal man is not thankful. Along with the abominations of the worldly, listed in Romans 1, is the statement in verse 21: "...when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful ..." The unconverted heart is an unthankful heart.

A thankful heart is an humble, yielded heart. It is pliable and recognizes each favor. A humble heart confesses its needs and weaknesses, and is thankful for help. A proud heart does not give thanks but is convinced that others owe thanks to him.

A thankful heart is a loving heart. It reaches out and gives and believes that it receives more than it deserves. Charity "seeketh not her own." "Love cures people--both the ones who give it and the ones who receive it."

I have been reading about Absalom--David's son. His name means "father of peace" or "friendly." I suppose he was friendly. In fact, he stole the hearts of the people by his friendliness. But he was certainly not a father of peace. How would we describe him? Proud? Handsome? Influential? He was all these and more: crafty and treacherous. We must realize that God punished David for his sins by his son's rising up against him. The disgrace of David by Absalom was a direct result of David's taking Uriah's wife and his life.

But even though Absalom would have assassinated his father, David mourned for Absalom when he was slain and the rebellion put down.

What has this to do with thanksgiving? Psalm 3 is David's prayer of appreciation for God's protection at this very time. David would have given his life for his son, but this was not possible. In order to be delivered, David was going to have to suffer. Though God forgave his sins and rescued him, because of his sins there were sad results that had to follow.

Is it somewhat this way with us? God, through the sacrifice of His Son, has forgiven our sins. This allows us to be justified before Him and to be His children --born into His family. But when we violate His laws there are consequences that follow, and we can only be thankful that God is in control and that we are His children.

Thankful hearts are the result of seeing this hand of God in our lives both in mercy and in chastening. We see in Paul a thankful heart. His essay on thanksgiving, at the end of II Cor. 9 closes with verse 15: "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." He could say this in spite of the trials he endured for Jesus' sake. The Lord had told Ananias

concerning Paul: "I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." He lists his persecutions in II Cor. 11, though he is careful to explain that "I speak foolishly." He told of his experiences in his own defense, for some were taking advantage of these simple, sincere Christians, discounting Paul and leading them away from the simple Gospel of Christ. The sufferings were Paul's credentials. He tells us in I Thess. 5:18, "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

We can thank God for His chastening because it shows that He deals with us as a father deals with his son. We are to take it patiently when God chastens us for our faults.

I know I have been at times too hasty in speaking things I didn't know all about. I have been critical of others. I have neglected to consult others when I should. These things we suffer for. How thankful we can be that we have a merciful Saviour!

Thankful hearts can just bow in submission to this all-wise Heavenly Father, knowing that His way is best. "Oh, give us all a thankful heart!" --L.C.

THANKSGIVING DAY OVER ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

(This article was first published in the Youth's Visitor dated November 26, 1939, in Nappanee, Indiana, nearly sixty years ago.--L.C.)

The world has changed more in the last one hundred years than in all those that have gone before.

To get some idea of the wonderful changes that have taken place, let us go back to Thanksgiving Day in 1813 and note how many, many great things our great grand-parents did not have which we have today. It will not only astonish us, but it will also make us realize how much we have to be thankful for.

In the first place, there was no Thanksgiving Day in 1813 except in New England. It was only a little over forty years ago that people all over the United States began to celebrate that day. Before that, if one did not live in Boston, or very close to it, he probably would never have eaten a Thanksgiving dinner. But even those who were fortunate enough to live in New England did not have anything like the variety of good things that we have today. Of course, they had turkey and pumpkin pie and onions and cranberry sauce and potatoes; but they did not have tomatoes or corn or peas or string beans or beets or asparagus or any of the other canned vegetables that we are used to eating during the winter months. There were no canned goods of any kind. There were no tin cans. Neither were there any cars to bring fresh fruits and vegetables--like strawberries and tomatoes and lettuce--from the south and from California. In fact there were no such places in the United States as Florida and Texas and California. They were all of them waste places or foreign lands. They belonged to England and Spain and France and Mexico.

Oranges, bananas, pineapples, grapefruit, olives, Malaga grapes, and other tropical fruits, which are so familiar to all of us, were never seen in the markets of 1813. Boys and girls of that day only heard about them from travelers or read about them in books.

Dinners were cooked in fire places. There were no ranges. There were no gas stoves; no oil stoves; no coal stoves; no cook stoves of any kind. Housewives had no baking powder, no yeast cakes, no self-rising flour, no granulated sugar, no flavoring extracts, no ground spices, no cocoa, no potted meats, no catsup, no prepared breakfast foods, no soda crackers, no macaroni. All the coffee had to be roasted and ground at home. Housekeepers then had very few of the conveniences that they have today. They had no running water in the house or stationery wash tubs or clothes wringers or washing machines

or wire clothesline. Neither had they refrigerators or ice cream freezers or egg beaters or waffle irons or meat grinders or carpet sweepers or ammonia or borax or gasoline or mothballs or fly paper or fly screens. And they had no matches, and they had no electric light or gas light, and kerosene.

But we must remember that in 1813 our great-grandparents were perfectly satisfied and contented without any of these things. They thought themselves very well off with what they had, and those who observed Thanksgiving Day made it a special point to offer earnest thanks to Providence for their many blessings.

Surely, therefore, if they could find cause for thanksgiving, how much more thankful we ought to be in the midst to all the blessings of the age in which we live.

COUNTING THE COST

Free redemption: is it really? No! It cost the death of the most precious One who ever came to earth, God's only begotten Son. If we could more fully realize the terrible price that was paid, it would cause us to hate and fear sin more. What will you do with Jesus? Will you kill Him afresh, put Him to an open shame? God forbid!

It is interesting to see the response of Job (who God said was a perfect man) when he saw the Lord: "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (Job 42:5-6.) Isaiah also saw the Lord, "...sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple..." And he responded, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." (Isa. 6:1,5)

Man tends to excuse himself by looking at others' failings. We compare other church circles to our church, and other people's lives to our lives. But God's Word says this is not wise. We excuse sin by saying we can't be perfect, but God knows our hearts. Do you believe God can make you holy, not only in His sight, but in the sight of the world? If you don't believe this, then you can't be a Christian. I'm not talking fleshly perfection, but that which is in the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (Eph. 4:24) But you say, "I can't help myself; I'm just full of sin." But where is your faith? The old man is evil from his youth. But when we are born again by God's Spirit, the new nature desires only to love and please God. It cannot sin; it only desires that all would come to God. So if you feel tempted to evil, when sinful desires bombard you, the desire to yield is not from the new nature, for it cannot sin. It's from the old man, and it can't be transformed; it must die. Don't try to transform the old man. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof.

Oh, if we could only get a glimpse of God and the Lamb in all their glory, we would say with Job, "I abhor myself." We would say with Isaiah, "Woe is me." And we would say with Paul, "Lord, what would thou have me to do?" And we would never again be satisfied with the flimsy arguments of the old man, to justify and excuse himself in sin.

What will you do with your life? Jesus is coming very soon. Will you follow the flesh, and this evil world, knowing this leads to eternal death? Or will you count the cost, deny yourself, and follow Jesus even until death? To whom much is given, will much be required. O the glory that awaits the overcomer of the flesh, the world, and the devil! But O the agony that awaits the lukewarm and flesh-pleasing soul who lives for the here and now. No one will ever regret following Jesus a thousand years from now. -Kevin Garber, Twain Harte, California

PRINCIPLES OF FAMILY LIFE

A good companion is next to salvation.

If you expect the best, you must be the best.

Children pattern after their parents.

Children should feel welcome in the home; they should feel wanted.

We need to keep their confidence; you should not be partial (love one more than the other.)

Get advice from older people.

Children should know that the parents stand together.

A child's will should be broken (before he is old enough to remember it.)

Proverbs 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

The way you use your mother and father is the way your children will use you.

Don't leave your child to the guidance of his own will. He doesn't know what's good for him.

Provide the right kind of literature. Some have more invested in library books than a car.

Some children are punished just enough to make them mad. Don't be rude to your children.

It takes a lot of patience.

Don't threaten the children all the time.

Their minds are like narrow necked bottles: a little at a time.

Your child comes first in your responsibility.

If one had the wealth of the world, you couldn't buy one child back from eternity.

If you take your own course you will not have the blessing of God and will go to the lake of fire.

Train your children to respect the Bible. You can't grow spiritually if you don't read the Bible.

Tell them about sin; the result is death. Tell them of a way out by salvation.

God is no respecter of persons. God didn't die for one denomination.

Tell them that Christ is coming.

Train your children to the habit of prayer. Parents, don't do all the praying. Ask the children to pray.

When children ask something, don't scold them; give it to them if it is good for them.

Always go to the church service. Be in church early and on time.

When you promise children something, give it to them.

Don't permit the use of slang words.

Don't allow disobedience.

Have them redeem the time.

These principles were suggested some years ago by Brother Herman Royer

NO SHADOW OF TURNING

Turn not around to look back where you came.
The Lord is not there so there's nothing to gain.
The penitent heart is forgiven and free,
So look not to what our God no longer sees.
Press forward, look onward, dear servant of God,
He calls you to follow in steps He has trod.
The Master, He loves you, you're His child by His choice.
The tempter's behind you, don't follow his voice.
Yesterday's dead, tomorrow's waiting to be.
But today's all that's given to you and to me.
So let's move ahead, with a straight, steady gait!
There's work to be done and God's blessings await!

-- Gail Storkel

THE JOY OF THANKSGIVING

It was a cold November morn,
Thanksgiving Day was drawing near,
That season when the loving hearts
Come home to share its love and cheer,
I wondered if these people knew
The God to whom their praise was dueWith this in mind I sauntered out,
To watch them as I strolled about.

I visited an old, old man
With long white beard and bowed form,
And asked him if he thanked his God
For sheltering him through life's long storm.
From off the mantle piece he took
With trembling hands the Sacred Book,
And, answering said, with reverence true,
"My Saviour knows how much I do!"

I strolled a little further and
I met a young girl, pure and sweet,
And asked her why she carried in
Her arms a child from off the street.
She looked at me and smiled and said:
"The baby's mama dear, is dead,-For Jesus' sake I take it home,
And share with it my pretty room!"

Again I questioned of a friend Who worked behind an office desk, And daily labored, sending forth Letters of cheer, a loving task. A wondrous love beamed in her eye, I needed not to ask her why, Close by her side a motto read: "For Jesus' sake" was all it said.

And now I know that in the hearts Of Christian people everywhere 'Mid rich and poor, 'mid high and low, Among the old, the young, the fair, There dwells a love for God and man A purpose to do all they can To lift the burdens, cheer the heart, And true "Thanksgiving" joy impart.

-- Author unknown

BAPTISM

Lena Wemken was baptized on September 27 in the California congregation. May she be faithful and grow in grace.

MARRIAGES

MARTIN -- HUFFMAN Andrew Martin and Marla Huffman were married September 27, at Bradford, Ohio. Their address is: 24951 C.R. 40 Goshen, IN 46526 (219) 862-2544

ROYER -- CONING Stephen Royer and Rhoda Coning were married October 11, at Wakarusa, Indiana. Their address is 28361 C.R. 44 Rte 3 Nappanee, IN 46550 (219) 862-1175

ADRESS CHANGES

Herman Royer 28772 C.R. 44 Nappanee, IN 46550 (219) 862-4142

Michael Harris 24820 C.R. 142 Goshen, IN 46526 (219) 831-3715

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES: THE GUARANTEE

When we purchase a product with a guarantee, we receive an owner's manual declaring on what condition this product will prove the claims of its maker. Outside of these instructions the product will not perform to its specifications and the guarantee becomes invalid.

Man, losing his fellowship with God, was without hope in the world and totally helpless to change his lot.

God's great love and mercy for man has provided a way with a guarantee that we can be delivered from our helplessness and bondage in sin and eternal death.

The owner's manual that comes with this informs man of his obligation in it; a personal faith and trust in this promise is an unconditional requirement. This faith will then empower us to forsake all we have and are. We are to prove this in humble service to our fellowmen--to the extent of giving all we have-even our physical life if need be.

Since this provision was made, man is no longer condemned for his inherited sin nature. What does condemn him is rejection of the provision made for his deliverance.

The proof and validity of being delivered is in fruit bearing that brings honor and glory to His name. Our physical body is involved in this--laboring with our hands so that we provide for ourselves and can share with those that aren't able to do this.

If we fail this proof, the guarantee becomes invalid and we'll become fuel for eternal flames of hell. (John 15:6, II Thessalonians 1: 6-9)

The natural laws in fruit bearing prove the spiritual requirements of the same. Natural fruit bearing is a corporate display of unity and beauty. It grows in clusters, on vines, branches, etc. If you see one fruit you will usually see another close by.

The corporate display of fruit bearing is a requirement in the owner's manual. By this shall all men see the beauty and power of the promised guarantee of salvation and deliverance from sin and eternal death. "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." (John 17:21)

There are three virtues necessary to experience this deliverance--faith, hope, and love. It takes faith to believe it, hope prompts us to action, and love inspires us to attain it.

"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."

-Kenneth Martin

CONTENTMENT

Content, oh Lord, help me to be With what I have each day; And never envy those I see Who are more blest today.

Oh, help me Lord! to realize That what You give is best; And ne'er to covet with my eyes, But quietly meet the test.

That I may thankful be, to You, For all You do for me. You all my needs supply, and do From all my sins set free.

Much more You give, than e'er I earn. How thankful I should be! With love to you, my heart should burn; From envy, I should flee.

Content, oh Lord, help me to live.
Sufficient is your love.
Enough, and more, You daily give,
And promise life above. --James Beery

CHILDREN'S PAGE MORE JEWELS FOR THE HEART

"Grandma's coming, Grandma's coming," sang Adam as he lined his farm machinery up against the living room wall. "I'm glad Grandma's coming!"

Mama, in the kitchen, smiled to herself as she listened to Adam singing. Suddenly, her smile became a frown as Adam's tune changed to an angry voice. "No, Teddy! Go away! Mama, Teddy messed up all my machinery!"

As Mama reluctantly dried her hands, she heard a sweet voice say, "Come with Sissy, Teddy. We'll go swing awhile. Okay?" With effort Elaine scooped Teddy up and carried him to the porch swing. Adam returned to playing happily, and Mother knew there was a new jewel in Elaine's heart.

After awhile, Elaine lugged the sleeping Teddy into the house. Mama gently took him and smiled at Elaine. "Thank you, Elaine. You have another jewel in your heart! Daddy's been working in the garden all afternoon. He'd probably appreciate a glass of iced tea."

Quickly Elaine got a large glass, put ice cubes into it, and poured tea from the pitcher in the refrigerator. Carrying it carefully, she headed for the garden and Daddy. At the sight of her, Daddy's eyes lit up and a smile spread across his sweaty face. "Thank you, Elaine! You are such a pretty picture, bringing your hot, thirsty Daddy a drink of iced tea! I do believe you've put another jewel in your heart!"

Elaine's eyes shone with happiness, making them look like jewels, too.

--Linda Frick Gettysburg, Ohio

FOR YOUTH: WHAT IS YOUR DESTINATION?

Do you know where you will spend eternity? I work with a man who says he wants to go to heaven. But quoting him, "Wherever I go, there's going to be a lot of my friends there, too." What good are friends without heaven? There's a song that says, "Everybody's doing it so why can't I, but if you go ahead and do it is it gonna satisfy? They might be getting by with the things they do, but if they go to hell, do you want to go, too?"

John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The Bible says all have sinned, but when Jesus died on the cross nearly 2,000 years ago, our sins were washed away. This doesn't give us the liberty to do anything we please, though. Hebrews 10:26 says, "For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." James 2:24 says, "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." Then down in the 26th verse, "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

This man I work with asked me the other day if he could get to heaven without going to church. I told him that was not mine to judge, but if we love God we'll want to go to His house to worship Him. He said that he loves God and he believes that he is a sinner and that Jesus died for his sins. But then he said, "I am not a God fearing man. How can you fear someone you love?" You know, it's kind of like little children. They love their Mommy and Daddy, yet they fear the consequences when they do wrong. Even so, when we love God who is our heavenly Father, we also fear His wrath. Ecc. 12:13 says, "...Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." So if we don't fear Him we are not

keeping His commandments, and what happens when we don't keep His commandments? Psalm 111:10 says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever." If we love Him and believe in His Son, won't we want to do His commandments? And if we keep His commandments what is our reward? Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Is that the reward we want or would we rather spend eternity wherever our friends are?

"...Choose you this day whom you will serve: ...but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (Josh. 24:15)

-Emily Brubaker Nappanee, IN

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THE PILGRIM

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"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from

fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." I Peter 2:11

AS WITH GLADNESS MEN OF OLD

As with gladness men of old Did the guiding star behold; As with joy they hailed its light, Leading onward, beaming bright; So, most gracious Lord, may we Evermore be led to Thee.

As with joyful steps they sped
To that lowly manger-bed
There to bend the knee before
Him Whom heaven and earth adore;
So may we with willing feet
Ever seek Thy mercy seat.

As they offered gifts most rare, At that manger rude and bare, So may we with holy joy, Pure and free from sin's alloy, All our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to Thee, our heavenly King.

Holy Jesus, every day
Keep us in the narrow way;
And, when earthly things are past,
Bring our ransomed souls at last,
Where they need no star to guide,
Where no clouds Thy glory hide.
-William Chatterton Dix

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LOWLY BABY; REIGNING SAVIOR

A spasm of the tiny body, a quick gasp of breath, a thin cry,— a new baby is born. Mother finally relaxes, with palms and forehead damp with perspiration. Dad's worried frown changes to a broad smile. Activity reaches a high in the delivery room and gradually diminishes as the nurses, the attendants, and the doctor finish their routines and put things in order again. Each child and adult (except Adam and Eve) were given life in this manner, though most had no advantage of the sterile delivery room. Large or small, tough or tender, kings and beggars all began as tiny infants.

Lowly? Yes, babies are as helpless at birth as any of God's creatures. Jesus' coming as a baby in the manger makes a touching story. What is so dear, so dependent as a newborn? Yet this was such a step down for our Savior. John 6:38: "...For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will but the will of him that sent me."

Down is a direction we shun. To go down financially has driven some men to drink or to self destruction. As we grow older we go down in health, and the prospect is not pleasant. However, this need not be discouraging if we are in Christ because Paul writes in II Cor. 4:16: "... though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." The going down is tempered by the promise of renewal.

Jesus came down, and surely the prospect of this debasement was repulsive to Him. "For he hath made him to be sin for us..." (II Cor. 5:21) "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." (Gal. 3:13) But Jesus, too, had the prospect of victory beyond the manger and the cross. Hebrews 12:2: "...who for the joy

that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Jesus came down to the manger. It usually makes headlines if a president or a king makes a tour of a slum area. He is pictured with the poor to show his willingness to help them. President Clinton visited a disaster area in Arkansas where he shook hands in commendation to our Brother Arnold Bowser assisting in the cleanup there. He recently jumped off his golf cart to shake hands with some young German Baptist farmers.

We sing about good King Wenceslaus who walked out into the cold, saw a poor man gathering wood, and took him in to dine and get warm.

We read accounts of men and women going to live and minister in the inner cities, or in the jungles, carrying the Gospel and bringing physical relief. We thank God and we are inspired by these examples of sacrifice. But they are insignificant beside the condescension of the Savior from the splendor of the "ivory palaces" to the lowly manger and cruel cross.

Jesus came down when He spent His thirty-three years among the peasants of Judea, Samaria, and Galilee. He said, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." (Luke 9:58) He evidently spent tine working in Joseph's carpenter shop and associating with fisherman. He ministered to publicans and sinners. See the joy of Zacchaeus as he slid down the tree to welcome a noble Jew who would speak to him like he was a person instead of the off-scouring of the traitors to Israel.

Jesus came down when He left Jerusalem to visit the seacoast towns of Tyre and Sidon in Phoenicia. There He encountered a Gentile woman who pled for Him to heal her daughter. In dealing with her rather reservedly at first, He brought out one of the greatest expressions of faith: "Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the master's table." She was willing to admit her low place to have

the blessing she knew the Savior could supply. So should we. "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

Jesus was taken down from the cross, and laid in a tomb. From there He rose to a victory that encompasses all who will also come down to the foot of the cross and be covered there by the soul-cleansing blood of Jesus. Jesus went from the manger to the tomb and from there back to splendor and glory. Our journey too is from the cradle to the grave. But we do not end there either. "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us." (II Tim. 2:11,12) May we be willing to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God (as Jesus did), that He may exalt us in due time.

A manger so lowly, a cradle so holy, Became the birthplace of our Savior divine. He humbled Himself and claimed no reputation To be the Redeemer, your Savior and mine.

He lived among men, yes the poorest of them; Laid hands on the lepers and healed all who came. He had no real home to call even His own Though Jesus, His name, is above every name.

Down to the manger and down to the cross He came to the poor, to the wretched and blind; But back to the splendors and back to His home And back to the Father, all glory to find.

Bow at the feet of this Savior divine; Bow at the foot of the cross where He died; Humble yourselves 'neath the hand of our God; Claim the rich blessings from Christ crucified. -L.C.

THE WAY OF PEACE

In the Rathaus in Munster, Germany, there are heavily carved cabinet doors in the Hall of Peace where the "Peace of Westphalia" was signed in 1648 to end the Thirty Years' War that had dreadfully devastated Europe. Perhaps one of the doors calls our attention above the rest. It is the door with a carving of two men with swords fighting one another. What makes this especially unique, however, is that neither of the men have heads. In their fighting they have beheaded each other, and now with heads dangling between them, they fight a futile battle.

The futility of war is dramatically portrayed here in pictorial language. Man is showing, from a human standpoint, a reality Christ and the beloved apostles so earnestly taught. The apostle Paul said it very eloquently: "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." (Gal. 5:15) He has just exhorted to neighborly love, and right after this he teaches us to walk in the Spirit and forsake fleshly lusts. The Apostle James also says this warring is fleshly. Language could not be clearer! And yet so many give lip service to Christ and the apostles--but, alas! how few heed their teachings! For human as we are, we continue on as the two men in the carving that are devouring one another--nation with nation, family with family, brethren with brethren.

But contrast the carnality of division condemned in I Cor. 3:3 with verse 9 of the same chapter: "For we are laborers together with God: ye are God's building." We want to be a people God tends, a habitation and house for God as we are so gloriously taught. But, we must realize that the teachings on peace, nonviolence, defenselessness, and love so permeated the life of Christ and the apostles that it could almost be said that this is the sum of Christianity: peace with God, peace with our Fellowman.

Our "vertical" relationship (with God) is only as good as our "horizontal" relationship (with His people). We realize this is with qualifications, of course. The apostle John repeats this in his epistles. In fact, those who continually stir up strife and have not submissive attitudes are to be avoided socially (Tit. 3:9-11) These are ones whose attitude is one of selfish pride. Grace is only given to the humble (James 4:6). This is very sobering for us to even think about.

Those of us who have been baptized among the Brethren (and other Anabaptist groups) have said we believe in the way of Christ and His peace, and have promised lifelong faithfulness to it--for we have said we believe this is the gospel of Christ. This means it is a serious and grave matter for those who seemingly just cannot find themselves in unity with the Body of Christ in a local, visible, and collective setting. They are breaking some serious vows--more serious than any other--for these affect our relationship with God.

This way of peace, or nonresistance as it is sometimes called, not only means avoidance of national war, strife, patriotism, propaganda, and racism; it also means working for peace and unity in our local brotherhoods, with *fervent* hearts. We must realize Christ has broken down the walls (Eph. 2:13-15) of all barriers whatsoever, so that He might reconcile peoples to *one* hope, *one* faith, *one* body--the Church or Body of Christ. It is imperative for those who have thus been born anew to "love one another with a pure heart fervently." (I Pet.1:22) This means as though a fire burns in our hearts. It is to be without hypocrisy, genuine and pure. This is the fruit of the Spirit from above and includes peacemaking, or helping others learn peacefulness.

We do not want to be like the two men in the carved relief in Munster--foolish and senseless, tearing one another up. This hurts souls, kills life, and tears all joy into shreds, leaving in its place emptiness, hollowness, and misery. We want war

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I have noticed this,
that when a man is full of the Holy Ghost,
he is the very last man to be complaining of other people.
-D.L. Moody

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YOUTH PAGE

Are You A Lighthouse? -Betty Beery	Jan
Worry Warts -Marlene Hilty	Feb
A Letter Paraphrase Of Jesus' Love -Emily Brubaker	Mar
What's Inside? -L.C.	Apr
The Christian Mind -Sarah Cover	May
Words Of The Psalms -selected	Jun
Mountain Climbing -selected	Jul
Tried In The Fire -selected	Sep
What Is Your Destination? -Emily Brubaker	Oct/Nov

CHILDREN'S PAGE

Christ's Pattern - Everett Oyler	Jan
A Lesson From A Blind Girl -Jean Martin	Feb
Doors -Everett Oyler	Mar
Hello, New Year -Jonathan Miller	Mar
Puppies For Sale -revised by Everett Oyler	Apr
A Mother's Love -Everett Oyler	May
Look For Something Good -selected	Jun
Suppertime With Joseph -Linda Frick	Jul
A House That Stands - Serena Foster	Aug
Pretty Sweater Or Pretty Heart? -Linda Frick	Sep
More Jewels For The Heart -Linda Frick	Oct/Nov

BIRTHS

DIKITIS	
Jonathan Lavern Cable	Jan 10
Amber Noel Oberholzer	Jan 28
(Benjamin) Levi Cover	Feb 12
Justin Loyd Cable	Feb 28
Marvin Earl Stalter	Feb 14
Jaron Lee Cable	Mar 20
Allen James Beery	Apr 14
Edward Daniel Cover	Apr 14
Daria Joy Martin	Apr 25
Christina Hope Beery	May 21
Amanda Jean Wagner	Jun 4
Kirt Clifton Martin	Jul 18
Sylvia Jean Royer	Aug 26
Ashly Renee Cover	Nov 19
Daniel Seth Hoover	Nov 22
Andrew LeRoy Cover	Nov 28
Barak Thad Martin	Dec 3
BAPTISMS	
Victor, Gail. and Crystal Storkel	Feb 23
Rachel Flora	Apr 6
Christopher Taylor	Apr 20
Eugene and Bogdona Dutkevich	Jun 15
Joel Royer	Jul 6
Caleb Royer	Jul 6
John Brandt	Jul 27
Lisa Pletcher	Jul 27
Lena Wemken	Sep 27
MARRIAGES	M. market and a second
Control of the contro	
Merrill Royer and Martha Flora	Dec 7, 1996
Eric Brubaker and Laura Cover	Jul 12
Philip Huffman and Rhoda Cover	Jul 19
Andrew Martin and Marla Huffman	Sep 27
Stephen Royer and Rhoda Coning	Oct 11
Glenn Wells and Sharon Frick	Nov 29
Derek Flora and Racine Yoder	Nov 29
DEATHS	
Creele Estel Arthur Sell	Nov 15
William David Hitch	Dec 5

eradicated from among the people of God. We want to burn as one fire for the glory of God--

"Wherefore burn poor and lonely As one needy brand Torches together, hand to hand. He who feels deep within him A fire burning bright, Must through that glow With his brothers unite.

-Otto Solomen

Then we can in reality be the holy and true Church of God in Christ that was so beautifully prophesied by the prophet and quoted by early Christians, "And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore ...we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever." (Mic. 4:3-5.)

We pray that Christ's Spirit, as passed on through the apostles, may move us to renewal of that vision, moving out of our isolated selves to the joyful *fellowship* of saints. After all, this was the very message of the angels when they proclaimed the Messiah's birth: "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, goodwill toward men." If this doesn't move us, what will? He's the glorious Saviour, Redeemer--and Reconciler!

It came upon a midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, goodwill to men,
From Heaven's all-gracious King!"

Still through the cloven skies they come With peaceful wings unfurled,

And still their heavenly music floats O'er all the weary world;...

Yet with the woes of sun and strife The world has suffered long; Beneath the angel-strain have rolled Two thousand years of wrong; And man, at war with man, hears not The love-song which they bring. O hush the noise, ye men of strife, And hear the angels sing.

For lo, the days are hastening on,
By prophet bards foretold,
When with the ever-circling years
Comes round the age of gold,
When peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendor fling,
And the whole world give back the song
Which now the angels sing.

-Edmund Sears

May we at this time rejoice in Him Who is our Peace-the Prince of Peace! (Isa. 9:6) Loving greetings!

Michael Harris Goshen, Indiana

ADDRESS CHANGES

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OBITUARY

CREELE ESTEL ARTHUR SELL, son of Arthur and Ressie (Liller) Sell, died at 9:27 pm. on Saturday, November 15, at his home near Bradford, Ohio. Born October 28, 1906, in Preston County, West Virginia, he lived a full life of 91 years and 18 days. He was the oldest of four children. His sister Marie Lavy lives in Greenville. His brothers Theodore and Simon are deceased.

On February 9, 1929, Creele married Susie Lavy, and to this union lasting 68 years and nine months were born eight children: Lee of Modesto, California; Ruby Wagner of Greenville; Lester (deceased); Calvin of Bradford; Martha Emerick of New Madison; Charles of Greenville; Edith Howell of Colorado Springs, Colorado; Glen of Bradford; Geri Hodge (foster) of Greenville; and Ed Hodge (foster) of Palatine Bridge, New York. 'There are 24 grandchildren, four foster grandchildren (one deceased), six step-grandchildren, 35 great grandchildren, seven step-great grandchildren, and many other relatives and friends.

Creele spent most of his life as a farmer and carpenter in this community. He was fortunate to enjoy the work that he did.

Funeral services were held November 19, 1997, at the Old Brethren Church near Bradford, Ohio. Burial was in the Oakland Cemetery.

-The Family

BIRTHS

COVER -- A daughter, Ashly Renee, born November 19 to Sam and Lois Cover of Tuolumne, California.

HOOVER -- A son, Daniel Seth, born November 22 to Glen and Rachel Hoover of Goshen, Indiana.

COVER -- A son, Andrew LeRoy, born November 28 to Jesse and Rachel Cover of Tuolumne, California.

MARTIN -- A son, Barak Thad, born December 3 to Neil and Lois Martin of New Paris, Indiana.

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES JESUS IS LORD

The last and final recorded message that God revealed to man came approximately sixty-five years after Christ ascended back into heaven. It came to the apostle John, on the Lord's day, while he was in exile on the Greek island of Patmos, because of the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

The church was growing in number and influence, and this was met with opposition and persecution. The revelation that came through John was dictated by Jesus Christ. John was the scribe, and it was directed specifically to the church in seven different locations.

The Revelation begins with the reassurance of who Jesus the Christ is, and which was, and which is to come saying, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." "I am he that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." John is told to write what he sees and hears.

It is, no doubt, the most intriguing writing of all Scriptures. It reveals in picture language the excellence of Jesus Christ on His throne, the effects and influence of His physical presence, and how it moves them that know and see Him to worship in adoration, praise, glory, honor, and majesty to His most holy name declaring, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

You are worthy to open the seals, because You were slain and with Your blood redeemed men for God, from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom of priests to serve our God and they will reign on the earth.

The Revelation message is clear in that the righteousness it calls us to can only be attained by a proper recognition of Christ

as Lord, and that He would be worshiped, glorified, and honored as the only source of salvation, and that there is no other name under heaven whereby men can be saved. The church at Ephesus, by outward appearance, had this salvation, but it failed the test of Christ's honor and majesty. Therefore the message to them was that they needed to repent of this sin, and acknowledge the height they had fallen from, and give the honor due His most holy name, as when they first believed. If they did not repent, their lampstand would be removed from its place.

We hear reports today of great things happening. Millions are gathering at one location, claiming a better relationship in marriage and confessing their sins. The power of mass movements and emotionalism can only be discerned by having the mind of Christ. The early church, in promoting faithful marriage relationships, didn't fare so well. There is one account of a man having his head severed. (Matt. 14:10) All the claims being made today have been the reality and blessing of the true church of Christ for nearly two thousand years. The source of this is in a personal relationship with Christ, and one another.

Also we discern in the power of emotionalism in mass movements, the monetary wealth the promoters are reaping. The Scriptures call our attention to this in II Pet. 2:3.

We don't want to condemn a better life where improvements are made in relationships. Our concern is, does it prove the true test of Christ's honor and glory the church has been called to, with a personal bond to this, and to one another? Christ's message to the church at Ephesus wasn't condemning their good works, but because Christ wasn't given the honor and glory in it.

To summarize: Christ's church, for nearly two thousand years has suffered rejection and martyrdom for teaching moral truths. Today mass movements and emotionalism are moving millions, making claims of a better life.

Our question is this: If the church of Christ wasn't able to move us to holy living in the Spirit of Christ, will Christ move us through some other channel?

Jesus said that in that day many will make big claims, but the answer will be, "Depart from me, I never knew you."

-Kenneth Martin

MARRIAGES

WELLS -- FRICK Glenn Wells and Sharon Frick were married November 29, at Bradford, Ohio.

Their address is

Rt. 4 Box 126

Collins, MS 39428

FLORA -- YODER Derek Flora and Racine Yoder were married November 29, at Nappanee, Indiana.

Their address is

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